



Jackson Reservoir

LAST UPDATED: FEBRUARY 2022

FISH SURVEY AND MANAGEMENT DATA

Mandi Brandt - Aquatic Biologist (Brush)

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General Information: Jackson Reservoir is a 2,967 acre water (at full capacity). Anglers can expect quality fishing for Walleye, Saugeye, Wiper, and Channel Catfish. Crappie and Trout can also be caught. Please visit the state park website at: <http://cpw.state.co.us/placestogo/parks/jacksonlake> for updated water and fishing conditions.

Location: Morgan County. From the I-76/Hwy 34 interchange take Hwy 39 7.2 miles north, through the town of Goodrich, to CR Y5. Take CR Y5 2.5 miles west to the reservoir.

Recreational Management: Colorado Parks and Wildlife

Fishery Management: Warmwater angling

Purchase a Fishing License: <http://cpw.state.co.us/buyapply/Pages/Fishing.aspx>

Amenities

- Informational kiosks
- Marina
- Boat ramp
- Picnic areas
- Modern restrooms
- Showers
- RV hook-ups
- Designated tent camping
- Designated hammock camping
- Hiking trails
- Fishing (open water and ice)
- Hunting
- Wildlife viewing

Regulations

- Min. size for Walleye and Saugeye is 15" (only 1 can exceed 21").
- Min. size for Wiper is 15".
- Min. size for Crappie is 10".
- Statewide bag and possession limits also apply.
- Fishing in the outlet ditch around the rotary screen is prohibited as posted.
- Entry requires a Colorado State Parks Pass, which is available on site.

Previous Stocking

2021

Walleye and Saugeye
Channel Catfish
Black Crappie
Yellow Perch
Bluegill
Rainbow Trout and Cuttbow

2020

Black Crappie

2019

Walleye and Saugeye
Channel Catfish
Bluegill
Rainbow Trout

2018

Walleye and Saugeye
Channel Catfish
Bluegill
Redear Sunfish

2017

Walleye and Saugeye
Wiper
Channel Catfish
Black Crappie
Yellow Perch
Bluegill
Cuttbow

Sportfishing Notes

Wiper

- This species is very abundant and anglers are having great success.
- Fish are often found chasing shad, so let the seagulls guide you.
- Fish the inlet when the reservoir is filling and fish open water at other times.
- Shad imitations or green mussels work well.

Walleye and Saugeye

- These species are very abundant and anglers are having great success.
- Try jigging, casting shad raps, or trolling shad raps and wally divers.

Channel Catfish

- Fishing the bottom off of the dam is recommended.
- Cut shad, cut carp, or shrimp as bait work well.

Rainbow Trout and Cuttbow

- Shore and ice anglers do well using night crawlers and powerbait.
- Boat anglers do well using small shad raps.



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About the Reservoir...

The South Platte Land, Reservoir, and Irrigation Company finished building Jackson Reservoir in 1902, making the reservoir approximately 120 years old. Water used to fill the reservoir is taken from the South Platte River near Riverside Reservoir, and flows down an 11-mile long earthen canal before reaching Jackson Reservoir. Similar to other eastern plains reservoirs, Jackson Reservoir was built to store irrigation water for agricultural use. Though some people began fishing the reservoir shortly after it was constructed, it wasn't until the early 1960s that people really began to understand the recreational potential the reservoir had to offer. In 1965, Jackson Lake State Park was established and the former Colorado Game, Fish, and Parks Department began managing the fishery.

From 1965 to 1970 the three fish species most often caught by anglers were Bullhead, Yellow Perch, and Crappie. In the 1970s the catch shifted to Yellow Perch, Bullhead, and Walleye. Catch shifted again in the 1980s to Crappie, Walleye, and Yellow Perch. In 1988, the former Colorado Division of Wildlife began stocking Wiper (♂ White Bass x ♀ Striped Bass hybrid) and Rainbow Trout to increase angler catch rates. Wiper was the most often caught species through the 1990s. Presently, Walleye is the most often caught species.

Jackson Reservoir is primarily managed as a warmwater fishery. For nearly 16 years, a heavy emphasis was placed on Wiper management due to the large success of this species in the reservoir. Though Wiper did well for many years, Wiper stocked in the reservoir from 2005 to 2015 had poor recruitment or completely failed to recruit to the population. Additionally, shortages in the availability of wiper during this time made managing for this species very challenging. More often than not, Wiper from other states are needed to augment the number of wiper produced in Colorado to meet stocking schedule quotas. Wiper from other states have often had limited success in northeastern plains reservoirs due to cold water temperatures at the time of stocking. The good news for Wiper anglers is that the Wiper stocked from 2016 to 2017 have done very well and the reservoir has a large Wiper population once again.

To overcome Wiper shortages in 2005 to 2015, higher numbers of Walleye and Saugeye (♂ Sauger x ♀ Walleye hybrid) were stocked into Jackson Reservoir as surrogate predators. These two species have had great recruitment success in the reservoir. Moreover, Walleye and Saugeye are easy to spawn and rear, making them readily available. Due to the success of these two species and the recruitment and availability issues with Wiper Jackson Reservoir is managed for a predator balance of 30% Wiper to 70% Walleye and Saugeye.



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About the Fish...

Tables 1-2. Data collected on fish captured during 147.26 hours of netting with four Colorado Parks and Wildlife warmwater gill nets and four American Fisheries Society warmwater gill nets during the 2021 fall survey.

Species	Total Catch	Mean, Minimum and Maximum Length and Weight								
		Min cut inch	Max cut inch	Total Used	Length (inches)			Mean	Weight (lb)	
					Minimum	Maximum	Minimum		Maximum	
BLACK CRAPPIE	1			1	7.17	7.17	7.17	0.25	0.25	0.25
COMMON CARP	24			24	23.79	6.54	28.50	6.59	0.12	9.83
FRESHWATER DRUM	111			111	12.98	4.96	17.80	1.11	0.03	1.84
GIZZARD SHAD	205			205	8.97	3.39	19.37	0.61	0.01	3.36
SAUGEYE (WALLEYE X SAUGER HYBRID)	15			15	11.40	7.52	18.98	0.94	0.13	2.90
PALMETTO BASS (WIPER)	24			24	18.88	16.14	27.56	3.93	2.33	11.24
WALLEYE	60			60	15.59	7.99	20.67	1.84	0.15	3.73
WHITE SUCKER	6			6	13.07	10.71	14.65	0.93	0.49	1.23
YELLOW PERCH	6			6	8.54	7.60	9.25	0.26	0.19	0.32

Species	Total Catch	Relative Abundance and Catch/Unit Effort								
		Min.Cut inch	Max.Cut inch	Total used	Weight Lbs	Percent		Catch per Unit Effort		
						Number	Weight	Number/Effort	Lbs/Effort	
BLACK CRAPPIE	1			1	0.25	0.22	0.04	0.01	0.00	
COMMON CARP	24			24	158.11	5.31	25.03	0.16	1.07	
FRESHWATER DRUM	111			111	123.01	24.56	19.47	0.75	0.84	
GIZZARD SHAD	205			205	124.26	45.35	19.67	1.39	0.84	
SAUGEYE (WALLEYE X SAUGER HYBRID)	15			15	14.05	3.32	2.22	0.10	0.10	
PALMETTO BASS (WIPER)	24			24	94.29	5.31	14.93	0.16	0.64	
WALLEYE	60			60	110.52	13.27	17.50	0.41	0.75	
WHITE SUCKER	6			6	5.59	1.33	0.88	0.04	0.04	
YELLOW PERCH	6			6	1.58	1.33	0.25	0.04	0.01	





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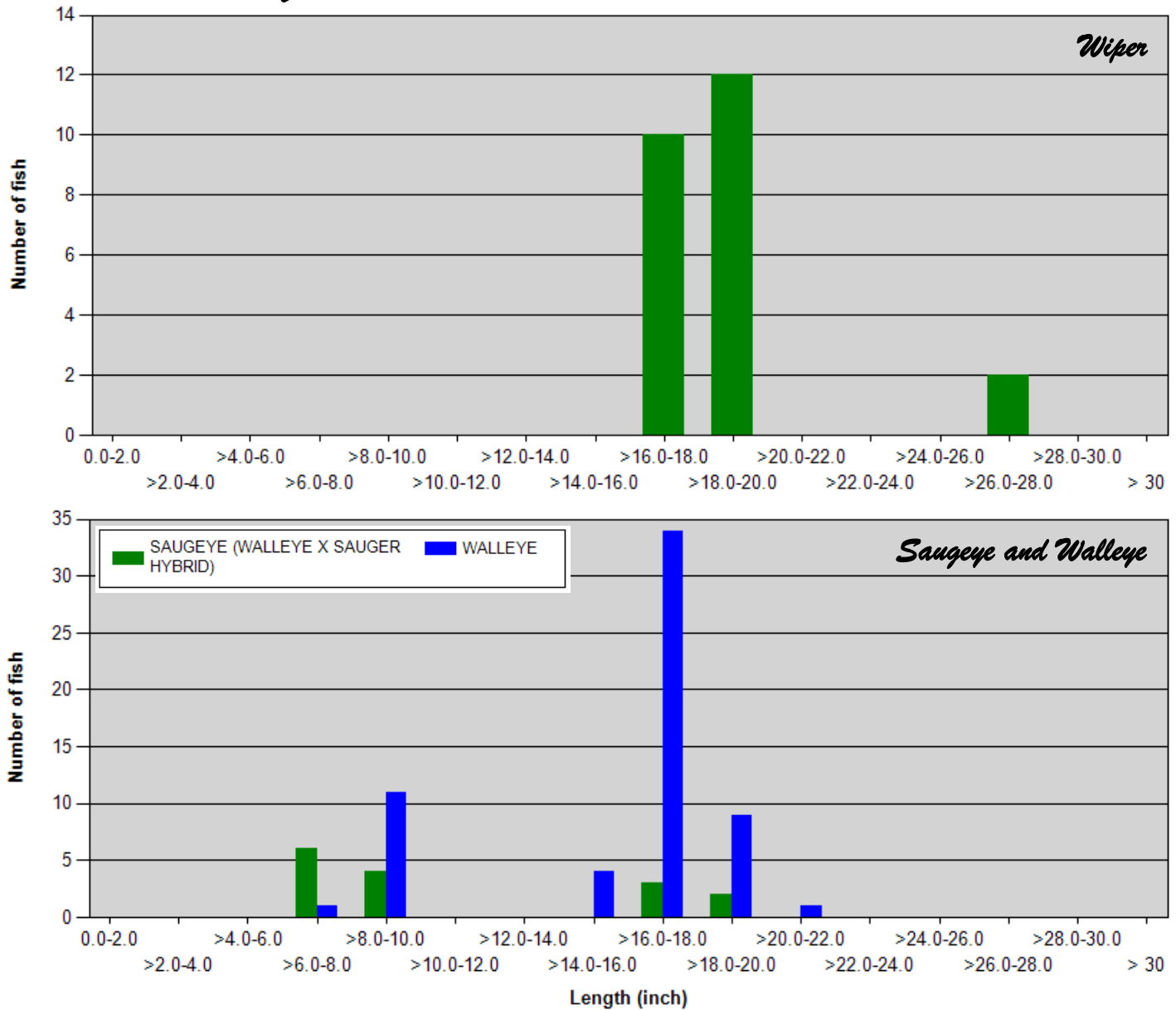


Figure 1. Length frequency histograms of Wiper (top) and Saugeye and Walleye (bottom) caught during the 2021 fall survey. The survey included 147.26 hours of netting with four Colorado Parks and Wildlife warmwater gill nets and four American Fisheries Society warmwater gill nets.