

Fishing Report



Friday January 15th, 2021

News and Information

COVID-19 Response

Below are some frequently asked questions we have been receiving from the public.

Colorado Parks and Wildlife reminds anglers, hunters, and all other outdoor recreationists that it is your responsibility to research and understand the specific guidance, ordinances, and restrictions in place for any planned local recreation - know before you go. To see specific county health orders, visit: [Colorado Counties Safer at Home Map](#).

Wakeless Wednesdays at Highline Lake?

“If we choose to add this restriction, there would be one day [a week where other recreationists can enjoy the lake without the waves](#),” Park Manager Alan Martinez explained. “We’ve heard from paddleboarders, sailboat owners, anglers and kayakers that this kind of arrangement should be considered so we’re holding a virtual public meeting to talk with our users about it.”

Kemp Breeze SWA Aquatic Improvement Project

Anglers who fish the Colorado River near Parshall are getting a chance to weigh in on the planning process for a major river [restoration project in the Kemp-Breeze State Wildlife Area. A virtual public meeting is planned for Tuesday, Jan 19 at 6:30 p.m.](#)




The Kemp-Breeze aquatic habitat improvement project is currently in the design phase and still has elements that are open for public input. The goal is to improve river conditions for trout by improving habitat for invertebrates, especially giant stonefly, and for mottled sculpin, as well as enhancing habitat for all life stages of trout. The Kemp-Breeze project is the result of water project agreements between CPW, the Municipal Subdistrict, Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District, Denver Water, and other entities involved in the Windy Gap and Moffat Firming Projects.

CPW Southeast Region to host Sportspersons Caucus to offer hunters, anglers, and outdoor enthusiasts updates on important wildlife and park issues

Sportspersons from across Colorado are invited to Colorado Parks and Wildlife’s Southeast Region Sportspersons Caucus for updates on a variety of issues important to hunters, anglers and outdoor enthusiasts.

[The caucus is scheduled 6-8 p.m., Tuesday, Jan. 19, and will be streamed live, online via CPW’s statewide Facebook page.](#)

It will feature statewide roundtable representatives and Region Manager Brett Ackerman, who will provide updates on CPW efforts to expand access to public lands, to protect State Wildlife Areas and objectives for the coming year.

	<p>Now you can take the #ColoradoOutdoors anywhere. Follow us on @instagram @coparkswildlife! http://instagram.com/coparkswildlife</p>
	<p>Check out our CPW community on Facebook. Colorado anglers can “like” the CPW Facebook page to get tips, share stories and more. If you love the outdoors, this is the place to be. Before you head out, head for facebook.com/ColoradoParksandWildlife/.</p>
	<p>Fish with us on Twitter Colorado anglers can get updates directly from CPW on Twitter. Follow @COParksWildlife.</p>

Stocking Report

Body of Water	Region	Report Date
Vallecito Reservoir	Southwest	12/22/2020
Eleven Mile Reservoir	Northeast	12/30/2020
Summit Reservoir	Southwest	1/07/2021
Joe Moore Reservoir	Southwest	1/08/2021

Catch of the Week



Rick Gildea and buddy Jake Ruwitch, land one impressive looking trout the other week. The gentlemen were fishing in Estes Park on a dry dropper rig (Chubby Chernobyl to a sow bug). This massive trout measured in at 32 inches!

Would you like to be featured in the next CPW Fishing Report's Catch of the Week? Share your photo!
Email dnr_fish.reporter@state.co.us and put "Catch of the Week" in the subject line

Conditions Report - Metro

Aurora Reservoir

The reservoir is closed to boating for the season. This closure includes all hand launched watercrafts such as float tubes, kayaks, rafts, and paddle boards. As of **01/15/2021** Rangers are recommending shore anglers to call ahead prior to heading to the reservoir. Ice is reported 5-inches thick in most coves. Most of the reservoir is still open water. Fishing is slow to fair on trout using crawlers and jigs tipped with meal worms. Please use extreme caution when ice fishing. For more information call 303-326-8425.

[Aurora Reservoir](#)

Chatfield Reservoir

As of **1/13/2021**, park staff reports ice ranges from 8 inches at the North Boat Ramps and Catfish Flats to 4 inches at Roxborough Cove, Massey Draw and Eagle Cove. There is open water in other areas of the reservoir as well. With the sunny, warm, and windy conditions this week, expect those conditions to deteriorate. Anglers reported success catching walleye with rapalas, spoons tipped with wax worms and chatter baits. Few reports also were submitted of anglers having success catching catfish on night crawlers.

[Chatfield Reservoir](#)

Cherry Creek Reservoir

As of **12/31/2020**, staff reported that the reservoir is about 99% capped with ice. Not all ice on the reservoir is fishable as of right now. A recent ice measurement recorded about 5"-6" on the west side of the reservoir. Anglers have reported a hot walleye bite as early as this current week. Rapalas, spoons, and chatter baits have all reportedly worked well on walleye. The reservoir has closed to boating for the season. For the most up-to-date conditions for Cherry Creek Reservoir, please contact park staff by calling **303-690-1166**.

[Cherry Creek State Park](#)

Quincy Reservoir

Quincy Reservoir is closed for the season. It is scheduled to reopen March 1st, 2021. For more information call 303-326-8424.

[Quincy Reservoir](#)

Conditions Report - Northeast Colorado

Antero Reservoir

As of 1/15/2021, anglers reported 6-14 inches of ice. Pink and white tube jigs worked well tipped with meal or wax worms. Spoons and blades were also working well.

[Antero Reservoir](#)

Barr Lake

As of 1/13/2021 park staff reports that ice conditions are not good at this time and do NOT recommend ice fishing. There is a lot of open water and some areas with ice measuring only two inches. With temperatures increasing throughout the week and strong winds, ice conditions are predicted to deteriorate.

[Barr Lake](#)

Boyd Lake

As of 1/12/2021, Boyd Lake park staff reported the following ice conditions: Willow Landing 2-3 inches, Mussel Beach 2-3 inches, Heron Cove 3-4 inches, Marina Inlet 4-7 inches, Heinrich Inlet 4-6 inches. The water temperature measure 32 degrees. Fishing for large and smallmouth bass has been fair using jigs and artificial plastics in 20-30 feet of water. White bass fishing has been poor, folks are using jigs and deep runners in 20-30 feet of water. Bluegill fishing has been fair using worms from the shorelines. Crappie fishing is fair in the marina using Kastmasters and Rapallas. Trout fishing at Boyd is currently excellent using worms, spinners both in the marina and from shorelines. Walleye fishing in the marina is fair using slow death rig, bottom bouncer with chartreuse spinner and worm harness. Yellow perch fishing is also fair and most have been reportedly caught in the marina.

[Boyd Lake](#)

Eleven Mile Reservoir

As of 1/14/2021, The 11 Mile Marina reports the lake is 100% capped. Thickness is running 12 to 16 inches. The trout fishing is reportedly good. Action was a little bit slower but there was no shortage of big fish landed. 15 to 20 feet seems to be a consistently productive depth. Most big ones hit just off the bottom although you never know. We have seen giants just below the ice. Many different baits continue to produce. Kokanee fishing is fair to good but they are the most finicky fish you will find. We have seen very large schools at a variety of depths right down to the bottom in 60 feet. They are on the move and sometimes it seems almost impossible to entice. We are putting a bait down to the bottom and can move it up to fish faster than we can get it down. So we live with one up and one down. The fish have come through at every conceivable depth 15 feet to the bottom. Northern Pike fishing is reportedly good. Action continues to be consistently good with lots of impressive fish being caught. Water dogs and suckers continue their productive run with size and presentation absolutely mattering. Nice fish have been reported caught all around the lake with Stoll to Cross Creek being very productive. 8 to 12 feet of water has been good. Mid-morning and midafternoon has seen the better bite.

<https://www.11milesports.com/fishing-report> [Eleven Mile State Park](#)
[Eleven Mile State Park](#)

Dillon Reservoir

As of 1/15/2021 reports of arctic char have been landed in multiple location on the reservoir using a variety of spoons and teardrop jigs. Kokanee and Snake River cutthroat were still fishing well in the inlet and ice continues to build further into the lake. Swedish pimple and kastmaster tipped with waxworms are proving to do the trick.

[Dillon Reservoir](#)

Evergreen Lake

As of 1/15/2021 Evergreen continues to have excellent fishing conditions and stable ice conditions. Most areas show ice thickness greater than 8 inches. You will most likely not pull any 20-inch rainbows from this water body but it does provide an excellent opportunity to take the family out or show a new angler the ropes.

[Evergreen Lake](#)

Jackson Lake

As of 1/13/2021, parks staff reports the lake currently has 4-5 inches of ice on the west shore and south shore. Some anglers have reported up to 8 inches in some locations. Most anglers are accessing the ice from the South Beach parking area. Wipers and walleye fishing is fair using a variety of rubber and metal jibs. Live bait has not been very productive in recent weeks. There are still a large number of waterfowl on the central portion of the reservoir and they are keeping some water open in that area. It is NOT recommended that anglers go toward the center of the reservoir.

[Jackson Lake](#)

St. Vrain State Park

As of 1/15/2021, there is currently good fishing at the ponds in St. Vrain State Park. Blue Heron has higher quality ice on the southeast half, but there is also open water and skim on the northwest half. Reports from anglers include catches of 18-inch brooders, crappie, saugeye, and channel catfish have. After this week's warm temperatures and high winds, park staff reports, "There is still a good deal of open water on Blue Heron after yesterday, but our ice managed to stay pretty much the same. Lots of surface and shoreline melt, so we would still recommend the same places: SE sides of Blue Heron, Coot, and Mallard. Sandpiper and Bald Eagle are starting to look a little rough." Please use extreme caution, be prepared for a self-rescue, and fish with a buddy.

[St. Vrain State Park](#)

North Sterling Reservoir

As of 1/15/2021, ice has begun to form at North Sterling Reservoir. The park notes that the ice is approximately ½" to 1" and is currently unsafe for anglers. Warmer weather and high winds last week damaged a lot of the building ice but a cold front moved in earlier this week. Contact the park for up to date ice conditions at 970-522-3657.

[North Sterling Reservoir](#)

Conditions Report - Southeast Colorado

Arkansas River - Leadville to Buena Vista

As of 1/14/2021, Braden Baker with Ark Anglers writes, "The upper river is very cold and icy. There are some areas between the Lake Creek confluence and Buena Vista that will still offer limited productivity on the warmer days, but generally you'll find more opportunities further south towards Salida during the winter. For those determined to fish the upper section, deep slow runs or pools that receive ample sunlight are going to offer your best chances at finding active fish. If you can locate a pod of fish in the deeper winter water, it's likely you'll find a concentrated population holding together with a lot of vacant water upstream and downstream. Your window of opportunity will be limited to 11am to 2pm. Midges will be your most important forage to imitate, and pairing a small midge larva or pupa with a large attractor nymph like a stonefly is a great way to cover your bases."

Flows: ICE CFS at Hayden Meadows, 247 CFS at Granite (1/14/2021)

<http://www.arkanglers.com/>

[Arkansas River](#)

Arkansas River - Buena Vista to Salida

As of 1/14/2021, Braden Baker with Ark Anglers writes, "Milder weather has returned to the valley this week, with lows in the 20s and highs in the 40s. This is a much better forecast than we've seen in a couple weeks and it should yield more opportunities on the river. You may still find some slush flows in the river early in the morning but most days the river is clear by 10:30 or 11:00am. Winter cold will limit opportunities far north of Salida, but the river from Big Bend downstream will remain productive throughout the majority of the winter, outside of the coldest days. This time of year your best window to fish will generally be between 10am and 2pm, particularly in areas that receive ample sunlight. Fish have migrated to their usual winter lies such as deep, slow runs and pools where they can retreat to safety, but will actively feed out in the nearby runs and riffles when food is available. While you may still find midge hatches prompting sporadic surface feeding, most of the food in the river will be subsurface for the foreseeable future. Stonefly and other large attractor nymphs will be great anchor flies throughout the day, and you'll want to fish midge larva/pupa and caddis larva as droppers. Nymphing will give you the greatest flexibility to cover a range of water types. Not every pool and run will be productive, so it pays to try to find several areas to fish throughout the day. Usually where you find one fish, you'll find several. Strikes are subtle with the colder weather, so be very proactive in setting the hook on the slightest sign of a take. Try to fish in the sun as much as you can, as the solar radiation can make a big difference in fish activity".

Flows: 230 CFS at Helca Junction (1/14/2021)

<http://www.arkanglers.com/>

[Arkansas River](#)

John Martin Reservoir

As of 1/15/2021, the east and west boat ramps have been closed for the season until March 15th, 2021. Anglers are still able to fish from shore. Park staff noted that there have been few anglers at the reservoir since temperatures have dropped. Ice has begun to form but 90% of the reservoir remains open water. Lake Hasty was reported to be capped with ice.

[John Martin Reservoir](#)

Trinidad Lake

As of 01/12/2021, the lake is at 582 surface acres with a surface elevation of 6177.14. The water level is rising slightly. The ice conditions are fluctuating. Reilly Canyon is the first to ice over, however, ice thickness is unknown at this time. Some coves around the lake are also holding ice and a layer of snow. The majority of the lake is iced over with the thickest ice in and around the coves. The ice in those areas has been measured between 4 to 8 inches. Very nice trout and some walleye are being pulled through the ice.

[Trinidad Lake](#)

Conditions Report - Northwest Colorado

Delaney Lakes

As of 1/15/2021, roads are open, mostly clear and icy in some spots. Fishing has reportedly been slow to steady the past two weeks. Mainly cutbows and rainbows are being caught on waxworms, mealworms, tube jigs, ice dynamic lures, atomic teasers, and earthworm.

North Delaney is fishing steady for browns, cutbows and rainbows 12 to 18 inches.

South Delaney has seen steady action with cutbows, rainbow, and cutthroat, all mostly catch and release.

East Delaney has seen little to no action.

Cowdrey Lake is reportedly very slow. Only 1 fish was caught in the span of a two day tournament. Only one was big enough to measure legally in that time frame and it was a 16 inch cutbow.

Big Creek Lakes, the roads are open but only passable via snowmobile or high clearance truck with chains. Drifting is likely after the wind the past few day.

[Lake John Resort](#)

[North](#), [South](#), [East Delaney](#)

Granby

Fishing with Bernie Guide, Dan Shannon reported on 1/11/2021, "Busy weekend on the ice. Starting to see snowmobiles traveling the lake. There are lots of large slush pockets, use caution when moving around the lake. Fishing for Rainbows has been good in the early mornings along the dams, small pink or white jigs and spoons tipped with an egg or wax worm in 6-10 feet of water produces well. Lake trout fishing has been excellent. Finding fish scattered throughout the lake between 30-65 feet of water. The key has been using Vexilar to find fish, if you can find the fish they have been eager to bite almost any presentation. Tubes, spoons and various plastics tipped with sucker have all been producing."

[Fishing with Bernie](#)

[Lake Granby](#)

Grand Lake

Sam Hochevar, Fishing with Bernie Guide, reported as of 1/11/2021, "The bite for rainbows and browns has been decent. Most fish are being caught in 6 to 8 feet of water on small jigs tipped with wax worms. The lake trout bite has been slow this week. Most lakers are being caught in 30 to 50 feet of water on small plastics and spoons tipped with sucker meat."

[Fishing with Bernie](#)

[Grand Lake](#)

Green Mountain Reservoir

As of 1/15/2021, Green Mountain Reservoir reported 8 to 12 inches of ice. Anglers found success with white tube jigs tipped with sucker meat as well as tungsten jigs tipped with mealworms.

[Green Mountain Reservoir](#)

Lake John

As of 1/15/2021, reports from Lake John Resort indicate the ice has grown from our last report and is 10 plus inches in most places. Trout fishing remains excellent at Lake John with large 20 plus inch cutbows being landed. The resort suggested that anglers have been hooking fish on meal worms, waxworms, night crawlers, white leeches, and jigs. Anglers should use extreme caution whenever venturing out onto ice. This week's Catch of the Week was landed at Lake John!

[Lake John Resort](#)

[Lake John](#)

Steamboat Lake

As of 1/15/2021, park staff reports the ice is approximately 18 inches thick. The top several inches are slush/foggy ice but the bottom is very clear and safe. Depending on the day and temperatures, the top can get very slushy.

The fishing has been good, there have been several good fish pulled out of the lake so far this ice fishing season. Anglers are doing well with light colored jigs (white and pink) and mealworms. Call the visitor center, (970) 879-3922, for up to date information on lake conditions, open daily 8am-4pm.

[Steamboat Lake](#)

Vega Reservoir

As of 1/12/2021, according to the park's Senior Ranger, Vega has approximately 8 - 10 inches of ice and fishing is fair, with a good amount of quality fish coming through the ice. Weekends have been extremely busy with anglers and weekdays are popular as well.

[Vega Reservoir](#)

Williams Fork Reservoir

Rhett Feltman, Fishing with Bernie Guide, reported on 1/11/2021 "Fishing has been most productive in the first 2 hours of daylight and then slowing down dramatically afterwards. Eating-sized lake trout have become more aggressive and have been chasing Clam Flutter spoons off of the bottom, and picking them up when they are falling, so be ready for a sudden bite or pause in your line.

[Fishing with Bernie](#)

[Williams Fork Reservoir](#)

Conditions Report - Southwest Colorado

Blue Mesa Reservoir

As of 1/15/2021, there is ice and it is slowing building. The lola basin capped with 6-12 inches of ice. The ice is still forming East of Dry Creek and West of Elk Creek. Robby Richardson with Ice Fish Colorado stated, "The coves in this section tend to have the thicker ice. Be very CAUTIOUS if you venture out in these areas! So far, the trout fishing has been nothing short of excellent most days in most areas on most baits! It is arguably some of the best ice fishing we have seen in a very long time and it usually doesn't take much effort to figure out on any given day! This is a great time to get kids out on some great action as it is sure to engage their attention! A few yellow perch and lake trout have been mixed in with the trout, but we haven't spent much time chasing anything else so far".

[Ice Fish Colorado](#)

[Blue Mesa Reservoir](#)

Jackson Gulch Reservoir - Mancos State Park

As of 1/12/2021, staff at Mancos State Park report the lake is ice covered and people are fishing it with over 12 inches of ice in most areas along the dam. There may be areas that get suddenly thinner near mid-lake as it was slow to freeze. Look for changes in ice color and check ice as you move. Colorado ice is always highly variable. See this site's ice safety page.

Use extreme caution when assessing ice condition. Good action for rainbow trout 10-12 inches and yellow perch averaging 5 inches. A few larger rainbows being caught, along with a few perch near 14 inches!

Water level is very low, so there is a long walk through the snow to the lake edge. Standard ice fishing approached: small teardrop jigs (tipped with crawler, waxworm or mealworm), jigging spoons like the Swedish Pimple, and baithooks with PowerBait, 'crawlers, waxworms, and mealworms will work for both trout and yellow perch. Most yellow perch are small but ice fishing is a great time of year to catch some of the larger perch. We remind you to maintain distance from others while enjoying the fresh air, and to bring your hand sanitizer for using the park's waterless restrooms. Mancos State Park has had issues with dogs off leash causing safety issues, knocking kids over, etc. so there will be strict on enforcement of leashing of all dogs as required in state law governing your parks.

A park pass is required on vehicles in the park, all the time. Daily park passes are available at the self-serve pay station at the park entrance. Credit, debit, cash and check are accepted at the available kiosk.

[Jackson Gulch Reservoir](#)

James M. Robb Colorado River

As of 1/15/2021, all ponds have iced over. Please ensure the responsible and ethical release of fish and properly dispose of fishing line. Remember, the daily limit for trout is four fish per person. Fishing remains good across all ponds and anglers have been successful on a variety of baits. Trout are typically easily attracted with night crawlers under a float. Park staff can be contacted for the most up-to-date conditions, as conditions can change quickly.

[James M. Robb Colorado River - Corn, Fruita, and Connected Lakes](#)

Ridgway Reservoir

As of 1/15/2021, park staff report ice cover is around structures like the marina and buoy field. The ice is thin and variable with some spots holding 4 inches. With air temperatures in the 40's, use extreme caution as ice conditions can change rapidly. PowerBait and worms have been working well and there has been little fishing pressure so far this season.

Pa-Co-Chu-Puk, the ponds have light and variable ice cover, caution is advised.

The river is a fly/lure only section and fishing is reported decent with small nymph patterns in black, red and natural. The pressure has been high with sometimes as many as twenty vehicles still arriving much line in the summer. Be prepared to fish really light fluorocarbon tippetts to avoid spooking wary fish.

[Ridgway Reservoir](#)

San Juan River at Pagosa Springs

As of 1/15/2021 Duranglers report action is picking up with the warmer weather, and below the hot springs there might be a few warmer fish. Small nymphs and midges will be the go-to.

Flow: 43.5 CFS at Pagosa Springs

[Duranglers](#)

[San Juan River](#)

Conditions Report - Statewide

Statewide Conditions

Now that we are into the month of January, we notice a shift in fishing conditions. With the arrival of winter, we see low flows and clear waters. This means anglers must be more careful not to spook the fish when approaching the water. Browns have also finished spawning for the season, so be cautious of redds when wading along the rivers. With most of the waters beginning to ice over, anglers will have to primarily rely on tailwaters, which refer to the waters below dams or any other structure that regulates water flow. The regulated water flow keeps the spots from freezing over and provides warmth for the cold-blooded trout. Even with the warmer conditions of these waters, the fish will still behave sluggishly. Fish diets in the winter are made up primarily of midges and an assortment of small blue-winged olive nymphs and are occasionally supplemented by larger mayflies, annelids, trout eggs, stoneflies, and even caddis larva. Winter fishing typically consists of a lot of nymph fishing since the trout are not overly active due to the cold water temperatures, so try using stonefly nymphs and imitation midges. Remember that the hatches are much smaller in the winter, so keep your flies in the #16 to #20 range. It is also important to be mindful of your split shot usage. With the fish being sluggish, they aren't going to divert too much for food, so making sure those flies drift directly in their path is important. Be sure not to use too much split shot though because the last thing you'll want to do is to have to retrieve a snag in those cold waters. As the trout continue to get a later start, anglers should mirror that and look for ideal times to be from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Tip of the Week - Vary Your Ice Fishing Presentation

When ice fishing it is easy to get stuck in a rhythm and use one jigging cadence exclusively. It is important to pay attention to the fish you see on your electronics whether that be a flasher, or any other sort of sonar device. These units will provide valuable information when it comes to what the fish want that day. You can get an idea of how aggressive the fish is and adjust your jigging cadence accordingly. When you see a fish that quickly comes off the bottom to check out your bait that's a good indication of an aggressive and active fish and a more aggressive jigging cadence can produce a strike. On the other hand it is easy to tell when fish are more lethargic and more finesse is needed to get these fish to bite. A lot of times what I will do is slowly jig the spoon or whatever lure I am using up and down a couple times and then just hold it still, this change from a slowly moving bait to a stationary bait will oftentimes trigger a strike. Pay attention to your jigging cadences and change them frequently and this will lead to more fish on the ice!

Email us at dnr_fish.reporter@state.co.us

We would love to hear back from our subscribers regarding fishing reports, tips, and requests of material you would like to start seeing more of. Any useful feedback helps us make our fishing reports a "go to" resource for anglers fishing Colorado's waters. If you would like to report water and/or fishing conditions to be used in the next fishing report, feel free to submit a report to dnr_fish.reporter@state.co.us.

DNR Fish Reporter



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