News and Information

Hunters and Anglers Invited to NW Region Sportsmen’s Roundtable
Colorado Parks and Wildlife northwest region invites hunters and anglers to give their ideas and voice their opinions about wildlife issues at a Sportsmen’s Roundtable meeting which will be held at the White River Electric Association Building at 6 p.m. on Feb. 9.

CPW Southwest Region Sets Teleconference for Hunters and Anglers
Colorado Parks and Wildlife southwest region invites hunters and anglers to give their ideas and voice their opinions about wildlife issues at a Sportsmen’s Roundtable meeting which will be held via video teleconference from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 1.

Fishful Thinker TV to Showcase Colorado State Parks
Fishful Thinker TV, a documentary-style show for western anglers, is showcasing Colorado state parks and wildlife areas this season. Episodes air on the Altitude Sports and Entertainment network every Saturday at 9:30 a.m. MST.

Eleven Mile State Park Gearing Up To Host 2017 Ice Fishing Tournaments
Eleven Mile State Park will host the annual Colorado Classic Pro-Am Ice Fishing Tournament series held by Eleven Mile Marina. The South Park Ice Masters Traveling Trophy tournament will be held on February 4th, and the Marine March Madness tournament will follow on March 4th.

Crawford State Park Offers Free Use of Ice Fishing Gear
Ice fishing is growing in popularity, and Colorado Parks and Wildlife wants to make it possible for anglers with a valid fishing license to participate in this sport. As of January 1st, Crawford State Park has ice fishing kits that can be checked out at no charge.

Now you can take the #ColoradoOutdoors anywhere. Follow us on @instagram @coparkswildlife! http://instagram.com/coparkswildlife

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/.

Fish with us on Twitter
Colorado anglers can get updates directly from CPW on Twitter. Follow @COParksWildlife.
## Stocking Report

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Catch of the Week

A local angler with a 47 inch pike caught at Spinney Mountain Reservoir.

Have a fish you’re proud of? [Share your photo]

Fishing Tip of the Week

Fishing Tailwaters
While some of your favorite spots may be iced over or closed, tailwaters provide the flows and warmth to keep you busy in the winter months. While the water may be slightly warmer, do not expect the trout to act any differently from their typical winter sluggish behavior. Try to fish on days with good sun exposure. The warm afternoons will provide better hatches and more actively feeding fish. The most productive hours tend to be from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Most tailwaters you will come across will have low and clear flows. Keep this in mind as you approach the water and when you are tying your tippet and flies. Try to keep your tippet to fluorocarbon either in 7x or 6x. As for your flies, stick with nymphs in the #18 to #22 range. Pheasant tails, midges, BWO’s, and egg patterns are always effective. Eleven Mile Canyon, Cheesman Canyon, and Spinney Reservoir are a couple of the spots to check out for some great tailwater fishing this winter.
Conditions Report - Metro Area

Aurora Reservoir
The ice in the back of the Marina, Lone Tree, and in Senac coves still remains the thickest at 5 to 8 inches. Open water exists throughout most of the main body of the reservoir and the water level is rising. Perch and trout fishing has slowed down lately, but there have been some anglers having success using jigs tipped with meal worms and minnows. Please use extreme caution when entering onto the ice. 

*Just a reminder: The reservoir is closed to all boating as of December 1st.*

Conditions Report - Northeast Colorado

Boyd Lake
The lake has 6 to 8 inches of ice in most places. Most anglers are finding success by the marina and the north ramp. 

*Just a reminder: The lake is closed to all boating as of December 1st.*

Boyd Lake State Park

Dream Stream
The current water temperature is around 36 degrees with flows down around 40 cfs. The fishing is rough at the moment, due to the lack of actively feeding fish. There have been sporadic hatches of midges. Anglers have been catching a few browns, rainbows, and cut-bows sticking to the slower pools and tailouts. Midges and Beatis in the #18 to #22 range have been providing anglers with the most bites.

Eleven Mile Reservoir
The reservoir has roughly 15 to 20 inches of ice with a flow of 87 cfs at the inlet and 89 cfs at the outlet. The rocks around Goose, Deer, and Duck Island have been holding some nice fish. Pink has been the go-to color so far this winter for trout. If you are looking for kokanee, try depths between 20 and 35 feet. Wax and meal worms have worked well for anglers. The pike fishing has been excellent. The Water Dog has been the bait of choice, but stick to small or medium small.

Eleven Mile State Park

Evergreen Lake*
(Ice conditions as of 1/3/2017) The lake has an ice thickness that varies from 8 to 10 inches. Some anglers have been successful with crawler tipped spoons in 10 to 15 feet of water. In addition, don’t overlook the opportunity to catch a tiger muskie in the 36 to 40 inch range.

Georgetown Lake*
(Ice conditions as of 1/3/2017) The lake has an ice thickness that varies from 10 to 12 inches. Rainbow trout have been caught using Ratfinkees tipped with wax worms in 12 to 14 feet of water. There have also been reports of some larger brown trout.

Jackson Reservoir*
(Ice conditions as of 1/3/2017) The lake is at winter level and has dropped approximately 2 feet down. The current surface temperature is roughly 30 degrees. There is approximately 8 to 12 inches of ice at the outlet and 6 to 8 inches of ice at the inlet. Fishing has been fair to good for crappie, walleye, and trout.

Jackson Lake State Park

Seymour*
(Ice conditions as of 1/3/2017) The lake has about 12 inches of ice. Anglers have had success catching fish in the 10 to 14 inch range, with the occasional in the 18 to 20 inch range.

Spinney Mountain Reservoir
*Just a reminder: The reservoir is closed for the winter season and will open back up in the spring after the lid has melted off. Tailwater fishing is still permitted.*

Spinney Mountain State Park
St. Vrain State Park Ponds*
(Ice conditions as of 1/3/2017) The ponds have an average of 5 inches of ice. Anglers at Blue Heron Reservoir have been catching a mixed bag of crappie, bass, yellow perch, and walleye on small jigs and minnows. Sandpiper Pond has been producing some rapid action for rainbow trout and bluegill. Coot Pond has also been good for trout, and also offers anglers a chance to catch saugeye and walleye. The action at Mallard Pond has been slow, but is home to a decent yellow perch population.

St. Vrain State Park

[*] Indicates to contact the CPW Denver Area Office at 303-291-7227 for current ice conditions

Conditions Report - Southeast Colorado

Arkansas River Headwaters
The upper river has a fairly strong winter flow with around 205 cfs coming out of Twin Lakes. This is underway to vacate additional space in the upper reservoirs in anticipation of the spring runoff between late May and June. The river is pretty cold north of Stone Bridge, leading most anglers to focus their efforts in the Big Bend and Bighorn Sheep Canyon reaches. The flows on the lower river have risen due to increased releases from Twin Lakes. Direct sunlight is as important as air temperature, so focus on those clear blue sky days. Warm, sunny days will still find plenty of fish on the feed in the pocket water with mid-speed current and good structure, but expect more and more fish to be congregating in the deeper, slower runs. There they can be best tempted by striated midge patterns (black beauties, zebras, etc...), golden stonefly nymphs, and pheasant tails. Focus fishing efforts during the period of peak sun and warmth between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m.
(Courtesy of ArkAnglers).
Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area

Clear Creek Reservoir*
(Ice conditions as of 1/3/2017) The reservoir has about 10 inches of ice. Anglers have had success catching trout near the boat ramp using meal worms, jigs, and PowerBait.

Cottonwood Reservoir*
(Ice conditions as of 1/3/2017) The reservoir has about 12 inches of ice. Anglers have had success catching trout using meal worms, earth worms, PowerBait, and jigs.

Crystal Lakes*
(Ice conditions as of 1/3/2017) The lakes have about 10 inches of ice.
Just a reminder: Fishing is restricted to artificial flies and lures only.

De Weese Reservoir*
(Ice conditions as of 1/3/2017) There is about 6 to 12 inches of ice varying throughout the reservoir. The best ice is below the lodge (12 inches) and by the dam (6 to 8 inches). Anglers have had success catching average sized trout with a few in the 18 to 20 inch range using jigs tipped with meal and wax worms.

Hayden Meadows*
(Ice conditions as of 1/3/2017) The reservoir has about 10 inches of ice. Anglers have had success catching trout using PowerBait, grubs, and meal worms.

Ohaver Lake*
(Ice conditions as of 1/3/2017) The lake has about 12 inches of ice. There is a spring near the center of the lake that keeps the ice weak in that area, so please use caution. Anglers have had success catching trout with most types of bait.

Pueblo Reservoir
The current surface temperature is roughly 34 degrees. The west end of the reservoir is capped with a thin layer of ice, but is still unsafe for ice fishing. Fishing for all species has slowed down considerably during the past weeks due to cold conditions. Anglers should focus efforts from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. when the sun is the warmest. Anglers should try vertical jigging in 25 to 50 feet of water. Trout fishing has been fair from the shore for anglers using bait and spoons. The Arkansas River tail water is running at 75 cfs with temperatures around 39 degrees. The clarity has been good and the fish have been feeding on midges and BWO's.
Lake Pueblo State Park
San Isabel Lake*
(Ice conditions as of 1/3/2017) The lake has about 5 to 10 inches of ice. There is open water near the spillway and the shorelines are still soft, with cracks and ridges along the ice due to windy conditions. The action has been slow recently, but anglers have had success catching few trout. While ice fishing is possible, extreme caution is advised.

Skaguay Reservoir*
(Ice conditions as of 1/3/2017) The reservoir has about 10 inches of ice. Anglers have had success catching trout with jigs and PowerBait.

Trinidad Lake
The current temperature is in the low 30 degree range. Anglers have had success catching trout along the shoreline using PowerBait, doughbait, and worms. There have been a few reports of perch as well. Ice has started forming in the Reilly Canyon area and along the south shore. At the moment, it is extremely thin, but has been staying throughout the day and continuing forming over night.

Just a reminder: boating has closed for the season as of December 1st.

Turquoise Reservoir*
(Ice conditions as of 1/3/2017) The reservoir has about 8 inches of ice. Anglers have been catching average sized trout using jigs, lures, PowerBait, and meal worms.

Twin Lakes*
(Ice conditions as of 1/3/2017) The lakes have about 8 inches of ice. The ice is still very thin near the boat ramp and no vehicles are allowed on the lake at this time. Anglers have had success catching trout using jigs with sucker meat, grubs, PowerBait, and meal worms.

(*) Indicates to contact the CPW Colorado Springs Area Office at 719-227-5200 for current ice conditions

Conditions Report - Northwest Colorado

Blue River
The current temperature is around 32 degrees with flows of 254 cfs below Green Mountain Reservoir, and 98 cfs below Dillon Reservoir. Anglers have had success catching rainbows leading with eggs or mysis shrimp, traild by red or black midges.

Cowdrey Reservoir*
(Ice conditions as of 1/3/2017) The reservoir has about 12 inches of ice. Fishing has been sporadic thus far, however most trout have been in the 12 to 15 inch range.

Delaney Butte Lakes*
(Ice conditions as of 1/3/2017) The lakes have about 12 inches of ice. Fishing has been decent, with most action being seen in the morning. Most trout have been in the 16 to 20 inch range, with the occasional 20 inch. Anglers have had success with smaller tube jigs, Atomic Teasers, and Kastmasters.

Dillon Reservoir*
(Ice conditions as of 1/3/2017) Wind and warm weather have slowed ice formation this year, but the lake is now fully covered. Fishing has been good for fall-stocked rainbows, arctic char, and kokanee. All arctic char less than 20 inches must be returned to the water immediately.

Harvey Gap*
(Ice conditions as of 1/3/2017) The reservoir has about 6 inches of ice in some locations, with much thinner ice and open water found around the shoreline.

Just a reminder: be sure to know how to identify tiger muskie from northern pike. All tiger muskie less than 36 inches must be release alive.

Harvey Gap State Park
Fryingpan River
The current water flow is at 83 cfs with temperatures in the high 30 degree range. Anglers have had success catching rainbows near the dam using midges, mysis shrimp, and BWO’s.

Lake John*
(Ice conditions as of 1/29/2017) The lake currently has about 20 inches of ice. Fishing thus far has been great, with all sizes of fish being caught. Anglers have had success using small jigs, tubes, and Kastmasters, and meal worms. Most action will be found in depths between 8 and 14 feet.

Mack Mesa Lake*
(Ice conditions as of 1/3/2017) The lake has open water near the shore again. The ice has melted, and most of the lake is fishable from the bank as well as the pier. Anglers have had success catching trout with night crawlers. If the lake does freeze over, DO NOT go on to ANY park of the lake unless you are entirely sure you can do so safely.

Rifle Gap*
(Ice conditions as of 1/3/2017) The reservoir has about 2 to 6 inches of ice. Some anglers have started ice fishing, but extreme caution is advised. Anglers have been catching a mixed bag of perch, walleye, and bass.

Stagecoach Reservoir*
(Ice conditions as of 1/14/2017) The reservoir is completely iced over with 10 to 12 inches at the coves and inlets, and 6 to 8 inches towards the middle of the reservoir. Anglers have had success catching rainbows at the inlet and coves using PowerBait, nightcrawlers, jigs, and spoons.
Stagecoach State Park

Vega Reservoir*
(Ice conditions as of 1/16/2017) The lake is now frozen in most areas with around 10 to 14 inches of ice with a fair amount of slush on the surface. Please use caution when accessing the lake as the ice thickness may vary. Anglers have had success catching rainbows in the 12 to 18 inch range using PowerBait, meal worms, and ice jigs.
Just a reminder: all three boat ramps are closed for the winter.
Vega State Park

Wolford Mountain Reservoir*
(Ice conditions as of 1/3/2017) The lake has an ice thickness of 6 to 8 inches with a few inches of snow on top. Fishing has been good for catchable-size rainbows that were stocked in the fall. Once the ice thickness reaches 15 inches, vehicles will be allowed on the lake.

Yampa
The current water temperature is around 40 degrees, with a flow of 55 cfs. Anglers have had success fishing the tailwaters between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. using midges, eggs, and BWO’s.

(*) Indicates to contact the CPW Grand Junction Area Office at 970-255-6100 for current ice condition

Conditions Report - Southwest Colorado

Echo Canyon Reservoir*
(Ice conditions as of 1/3/2017) The reservoir has about 3 to 5 inches of ice. Trout fishing has been fair to good.

Island Lake*
(Ice conditions as of 1/3/2017) The lake has about 12 inches of ice with slushy conditions on the surface. Anglers have an excellent opportunity for catching 10 to 12 inch rainbow trout, wild cutthroat trout, and brook trout.

Jackson Gulch Reservoir
Ice thickness near the dam is as high as 8 inches, with the top three inches milky white, poor quality ice. As you move north toward the inlet, quality rapidly deteriorates, so use caution. The lake offers good to excellent fishing for rainbow trout and yellow perch. For rainbows, small (1/8 oz) jigs tipped with a piece of worm or mealworm, or PowerBait works well. The trout are often suspended in the water column, so vary the depth that you fish. You’ll often find the relatively small yellow perch in very thick schools right at the bottom in depths of 40+ feet. Use a small profile, but heavy jig or spoon to quickly get to the bottom. Tip it with worm and be sure to use very sensitive line like fluorocarbon.
Mancos State Park
Miramonte Reservoir*
(Ice conditions as of 1/3/2017) The reservoir has about 10 inches of ice. Anglers are having success catching a mixed bag of rainbow, brown, and Snake River cutthroat trout, with most being in the 12 to 15 inch range and the occasional 18 inch. Crayfish imitations such as small tube jigs are good bets. Try tipping your jigs with half of a mealworm or a wax worm. Fish are currently spread through the reservoir from 6 to 20 feet.

Road Canyon Reservoir*
(Ice conditions as of 1/3/2017) The reservoir has about 10 to 12 inches of ice. Anglers have had success catching rainbow and brook trout using jigs tipped with meal worms or wax worms.

Williams Creek Reservoir*
(Ice conditions as of 1/3/2017) The reservoir currently has about 6 inches of ice. Trout fishing has been relatively slow.

(*) Indicates to contact the CPW Durango Area Office at 970-247-0855 for current ice conditions

Conditions Report - Statewide

Rivers and Creeks
Now that we are into the month of January, we will 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.

DNR Fish Reporter

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