News and Information

Upcoming Fishing Tournaments and Events

Public Meeting scheduled to discuss project to establish endangered fish in Webster Pond
Boulder County Parks & Open Space along with Colorado Parks and Wildlife will host a public meeting at 6 p.m., March 3, at 5201 St. Vrain Road in Longmont to discuss the proposed removal of fish from Webster Pond. Webster pond was damaged following the September 2013 flood resulting in a marginal sport fishery with very limited access for anglers. As a result, fishing was prohibited in Webster Pond post flood. The goal of this project is to establish state listed warm and cool water species in the existing wetland pond. Species include the state endangered Northern Redbelly Dace and state threatened Brassy Minnow.

Sharply rising water forces CPW to close Lake Pueblo’s South Marina, ramp indefinitely at least until spring release of irrigation water
Due to sharply rising water levels, the staff of Lake Pueblo State Park will be forced to close indefinitely the South Marina boat ramp beginning this weekend. This means any boater wanting to enter or exit the water must use the park’s North Ramp, which remains open for now. Park staff is closely monitoring water levels at the North Ramp, which has never closed for high water in past years.

“Longtime fans of Lake Pueblo State Park know this tends to happen in wet years and when there is heavy snowpack in the mountains,” said Monique Mullis, park manager for Colorado Parks and Wildlife. “We went through this in 2015, 2016 and 2018. And we’ve been anticipating it again this spring. When the water levels recently jumped a foot in five days, we knew this was inevitable.”

Whirling Disease resistant rainbow trout now a reality in Colorado
Whirling Disease first impacted Colorado’s rainbow trout in the mid-1990s and eliminated many wild populations of this popular sport fish. The aquatic tragedy sparked a decades-long effort by Colorado Parks and Wildlife research scientists to find a remedy and re-establish populations.

“Thanks to advance genetic testing, we know these fish are maintaining their resistance to whirling disease,” said George Schisler, CPW’s aquatic research chief. “Now they are surviving, reproducing and contributing to future generations of Gunnison River rainbows.”

Blue Mesa Reservoir Lake Trout Tournament starts February 1; $10,000 in cash prizes
A six-month-long fishing tournament with $10,000 in prize money sponsored by Colorado Parks and Wildlife starts February 1 at Blue Mesa Reservoir near Gunnison in Western Colorado. The tournament, which continues through July 31, is aimed at maintaining adequate kokanee fry survival by limiting predation from lake trout. Anglers are asked to target smaller-sized lake trout, those that are 24 inches in length or smaller.
## Stocking Report

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## Catch of the Week

Danny shared his colorful catch with us from Salt Lick Gulch!

Have a fish you are proud of? Share your photo!
Email [dnr_fish.reporter@state.co.us](mailto:dnr_fish.reporter@state.co.us) and put “Catch of the Week” in the subject line
Conditions Report - Metro

Aurora Reservoir
This 762-acre impoundment is located off of E. Quincy Avenue, two miles east of E-470. As of 2/28/2020, iced over currently and there is no open water for shore fishing. Ice conditions are questionable. Two anglers fell in last weekend. Please use extreme caution! The thickest ice is in the back of the coves and is 5 to 7 inches thick. Ice beyond the coves ranges from 2 to 4 inches. The water level is coming up quickly and there is open water along the shoreline making it difficult at times to get on and off the ice. Trout fishing is slow to fair. A few reports of walleye and perch being caught in 30 feet of water. For more information call 303-326-8425. January Park Hours are 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Closed to boating for the season - this also includes all hand launched watercraft such as canoes, kayaks, rafts, paddle boards, etc.

Chatfield Reservoir
This 1,356 impoundment is located in Chatfield State Park. As of 2/28/2020, ice thickness varies around the reservoir from skim to 8 inches. Please use caution. Warmer days and high winds are melting the shorelines quickly so use caution if you head out as the shorelines may be unstable. It is recommended to take a spud bar with you and check the ice as you venture out. Ice conditions on the Front Range can change quickly and recent warm temperatures have likely further melt and reduced the amount of ice on the reservoir. Anglers have had success catching trout through the ice using a variety of techniques. Small, tungsten jigs tipped with meal, wax, or earth worms have been working well for trout. There have been reports of a few walleye and perch being caught as well. Jigging raps are a great way to catch walleye through the ice.

Cherry Creek
This 881-acre impoundment is located in Cherry Creek State Park, in Aurora. There are two entrances to the park, the east entrance off S. Dayton St. and the west entrance off S. Parker Rd. As of 2/28/2020, there is about 6-8 inches reported near the tower area. The recent high winds and warming temperatures could make getting on and off the ice difficult. Use a spud bar and caution. Anglers have reported success catching walleyes and crappie in the evenings and after dark. The lake is closed to boating and park office hours are Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Quincy Reservoir
As of 2/14/2020, Quincy Reservoir closed for the season. For more information call 303-326-8425.

Conditions Report - Northeast Colorado

Antero Reservoir
Reported on 2/28/2020, Antero Reservoir continues to hold good ice. It is best to get out early in the day. Anglers have had success catching rainbows, cutbows, and browns with reports of some up to 20 inches being caught! Small tungsten jigs (chartreuse and pink) have been working the best when tipped with a meal, wax, or earth worm. Look for deep weed beds to fish for larger trout. Keep an eye on approaching storm fronts to change the barometric pressure and increase success. Normal dead sticking techniques will work here and try dead sticking a jig with a meal worm.

Boyd Lake
As of 2/28/2020, there is mostly open water with only 1 to 2 inches of ice in the marina and Heinricy Inlet. At this time, it is not advised to venture onto the thin ice. No snowmobiles or Off Highway Vehicles are allowed on Boyd Lake State Park. Any live fish collected for use as bait may only be used in the same body of water from which they were collected. All live bait/fish from a commercial source and imported by anglers must at all times be accompanied by a receipt for the source. If you do not use all live aquatic bait in one trip, you must provide your own distilled water to transport from each body of water. No fishing from Marina slips or docks.

Deckers and Cheesman Canyon
As of 2/21/2020, fishing has been difficult. Key in on hatches of midges and look to small midges and emerger patterns to be productive in the open runs and deeper pools. During the winter season it is important to try to drift flies mid water column rather than along the bottom. Fishing during the warmest times of the day (11 a.m. to 3 p.m.).

Flows: 166 CFS below Cheesman Reservoir (2/27/2020)
Eleven Mile Reservoir
Report from the Eleven Mile Marina Weekly Fishing Report. As of 2/27/2020, “ice thickness is running 22 to 30 hard inches with a snow cap of 6 to 12 inches. Trout fishing is fair to good. Stockers are still hanging out at North Shore but are also hanging at Coyote Ridge and Corral Cove. There are bigger fish chasing them into shallow water. Other areas like Howbert and Stoll seeing typical and standard Cuttbows running 16 to 19 inches. Lazers, Tots, Tube jigs, Trout Traps and Marabous doing well. Change up color and size if rejected and do not forget the spoons tipped with something is always a good bet. We have garlic mealworms and they are working very well. Look to mid-morning for a strong bite. If no fish in an hour, must move even if it is just a little bit. A little move can often make a big difference. Kokanee fishing is fair. The hike is not fun but when the schools stop underneath you, it can be lots of fun. The larger schools tend to be the smaller fish. They have been biting better but they are still a challenging fish to catch. Limit of 10 does not come easy or at all. Some anglers report getting to 6-8. We still like working bigger spoons like the Krocodile, Kastmaster and Swedish Pimple. The pearl white Kro did well last week. You always seem to catch a few trout in the process so it is worth the effort to score a few salmon bellies. Nothing is more exciting than seeing your Vexilar light up like a Christmas tree. Northern Pike fishing is fair to poor. A slower ice season to be sure. We are hoping action picks up as we move into March. The fish are there but only the smaller ones seem to be interested. Patience and persistence can pay off. Try Rocky Flats to Stoll Mountain. North Shore has seen some monsters but they seem to be only interested in the stockers hanging around. Waterdogs and suckers best bet. The closer to the rocks the more fish we see. Try 3 to 12 feet of water as they tend to corral the smaller fish in the shallows.”

https://www.11milesports.com/fishing-report
Eleven Mile State Park

Georgetown Lake
This 55 acre reservoir offers good fishing for wild brown trout and stocked rainbow trout. From Idaho Springs, continue west on I-70 to Georgetown exit. Go south under I-70 to second stop sign. Turn east and continue to the lake. Reported 2/28/2020, the lake is completely capped with good ice and there have not been any recent reports. Things have slowed down a bit as temperatures increase in the afternoon and do not be afraid to move around and check new areas. Use caution near the bridge. Anglers have had success catching browns with small jigs tipped with meal and Kastmasters. Rainbows have been biting on small jig heads with plastics. Pink and white jigs have been the best. Bring your shelter, if you have one, to give you a break from the wind.
Georgetown Lake

Jefferson Lake
As of 2/28/2020, this is usually one of the first bodies of water to form solid ice in Colorado because of its elevation. There is good ice at the lake and over 20 inches of ice has been reported in some areas. Anglers have reported marking fish in deeper water (40 or more feet) and that a variety of presentations have been producing a bite. Tungsten jigs, jigging shad raps, Kastmasters, and various spoons can entice trout here. If the bite is slow, move around! White tubes tipped with sucker meat have been working well.
Jefferson Lake

St. Vrain State Park
As of 2/27/2020, the recent warm weather and high winds has cause much of the ice to deteriorate. Blue Heron Reservoir is has some of the only ice left and is close to 4 inches. There has been a lot of afternoon melt, especially along shorelines on the ponds to the east side of the park. This weekend is expecting warmer temperatures. There are several ponds that are not stocked with trout for more well-rounded anglers: Bald Eagle, Blue Heron, Pelican (this year), and Pintail. Two of which are trophy bass ponds, the other two have pike, respectively; Bass in ‘B’ ponds, Pike in ‘P’ ponds. Check the park conditions page for St. Vrain for more up to date information on the ice conditions. There are 11 fishable ponds at St. Vrain that are stocked on a regular basis. Ice fishing is allowed on all ponds except Pelican Pond, which has an aeration system that makes ice extremely dangerous. Ice fishing is not recommended when ice is less than 4 inches thick, cracking, or pocked. Bald Eagle Pond is artificial flies and lures only.
St. Vrain State Park

Tarryall Reservoir
As of 2/28/2020, there is good ice at the reservoir, 20 inches in some places with snow on top. Trout fishing has been good in 7 to 15 feet of water using small tungsten jig heads tipped with meal, wax, or an earthworm. PowerBait and salmon eggs will also do the trick. There has been a lot of anglers at the reservoir but crowds have lessened as more bodies of water around the state have safe ice. Kastmasters and jigging spoons should also do the trick and can even catch the occasional pike. Pink and white/glow jigs have been working well and try keeping them around a foot off the bottom.
Tarryall Reservoir
Conditions Report - Southeast Colorado

Arkansas River - Leadville to Buena Vista
Information provided by Braden Baker with Ark Anglers. As of 2/27/2020, “With winter in full force up north, the upper basin is challenging to fish during the coldest months, especially towards Leadville. Significant ice has developed north of Buena Vista, particularly above the Lake Creek confluence. On warmer days, anglers can find open water near Buena Vista and feeding fish, but through the winter months, the middle basin and lower basin near Salida are going to consistently offer more opportunities and warmer conditions. The low, clear water can make fish spooky, so approach with caution and be thoughtful in your presentations. Strikes can be subtle with the lower flows and cold temperatures, so bring your A-game! Plan to fish the upper basin mid-day through early afternoon, when sun exposure has had a chance to warm the stream and get bugs and fish active. Midges (#18-20) are the most common food, but stonefly nymphs (#10-12) and caddis larva (#14-18) are also effective imitations. Focus on nymphing deeper runs that get a fair amount of sunlight.”
Flows: 65 CFS at Hayden Meadows with ice reported and 274 CFS at Granite (2/27/2020)
http://www.arkanglers.com/
Arkansas River

Arkansas River - Salida to Canon City
Information provided by Braden Baker with Ark Anglers. As of 2/27/2020, there is a little ice in the river this morning, but nothing compared to yesterday's slush. The river will probably be clear by mid-morning, and should be plenty fishable through the afternoon. Today is supposed to hit 48 degrees, tomorrow 54, and Saturday 54. This is a great trend to see in February to prompt fish activity on the Arkansas, as well as comfortable conditions for anglers. The river is flowing around 450 cfs below Salida, and anglers should plan on seeing these higher than average flows throughout the winter. In order to aim for low, consistent flows of 250-400cfs during the spring to benefit the fishery, extra water is being released from Twin Lakes all winter to begin making room in the reservoir for the anticipated snowmelt during runoff next year. The low spring target flows will be ideal for the hatch of 2020's brown trout fry, as well as allowing the mature trout population time to maximize their caloric intake before entering the high stress season of the summer, when they operate at a deficit during the higher flows. Focus on fishing the Salida area from 10am to 4pm when the conditions are warmest. Even on days when you find some ice flow in the river following a cold night, fish will often resume feeding by the time the slush clears. With fish now occupying their winter lies, look for deeper pools or slow runs below riffles to find fish seeking food. These areas will have slow to moderate current; slow enough that fish aren't expending much energy to hold there, but fast enough that they still have a consistent flow of food being brought to them (when the food is available). In many ways, you are fishing opposite of the places you would typically locate fish during the summer. If you are used to targeting the banks and pocket water, adjust your sights a bit to focus on some of the slower, deeper channels out in the middle of the river. Midge larva and pupa (#16-20) are the most prevalent food source in the river these days, but immature stonefly nymphs (#10-12), caddis larva (#14-18), and baetis nymphs (#16-20) are still important. Remember, fish are much more lethargic here during the winter due to the cold, so you will need to be very thorough when fishing likely areas as well as aware of very subtle strikes. Small adjustments in weight and leader length can make all the difference. Anglers are still advised to fish upstream from Coaldale. The river below the Hayden Pass burn scar runoff is slowly recovering from the flash flooding and sedimentation of late 2018, but the section still contains only a fraction of the number of trout as the river upstream from Coaldale.
Flows: 450 CFS at Wellsville (2/27/2020)
http://www.arkanglers.com/
Arkansas River

DeWeese Reservoir
Located just north of Westcliffe. As of 2/28/2020, reports that fishing has been picked up slightly over the last two weeks. The ice thickness averages 16 to 18 inches but has areas with 20 plus inches thick. Anglers continue to have success in 15 to 20 feet of water. Slush is being reported so bring waterproof boots. Trout were caught on rat finkies tipped with meal and wax worms. There were some being caught on silver Swedish pimplies as well.
For current conditions, contact the CPW Pueblo Area Office (719-561-5300).
DeWeese Reservoir

Pueblo Reservoir
As of 2/28/2020, the fishing is fair to good for the warm water species that inhabit Pueblo Reservoir. Smallmouth Bass can be caught by slowly working finesse presentations out on the deeper flats and deeper structure. Walleye fishing has slowed but fish are still being caught in deeper water using jigging minnows and jigging spoons. Walleye are going to be found in deep water this time of year and there are reports that lots of shad are still being marked. If fishing from shore look for points to fish from and fishing on the bottom can catch rainbows. Rainbows can also be caught from the boat by trolling deep running crank.
Pueblo Reservoir
Blue River - Silverthorne
As of 2/27/2020, fishing has been reported as good lately and there continues to be ideal flows and excellent water clarity. While this river can be extremely challenging, there are massive trout and a more technical approach can lead to success. Dredging a midge along the bottom in deeper water (pools and runs) will get to the most fish however so take advantage of the sight fishing opportunities and cast the rig up stream enough so the terminal fly gets to the bottom before reaching the trout. The fishing will be the best in Silverthorne during the winter. Mysis shrimp are also a good option and use size #18-20. Size #22 Medallion, Mercury, Juju, and Minute Midges are some of the best options.

Flows: 100.00 CFS below Dillon and 155 below Green Mountain Reservoir (2/27/2020)

Delaney Buttes
There have not been any recent reports. As of 2/28/2020, North Delaney, near the boat ramp there is 18-20 inches of ice with 2-6 inches of snow on ice. Anglers reporting the bite is very slow and it is key to fish very early morning and late evening. Anglers using HD Ice Dynamic Lures in white and brook trout and tube jigs doing well. South Delaney capped with solid 18-20 inches of ice with 2-6 inches of snow on top. Anglers are most happy with the activity coming from this lake right now. Catching is plentiful, not huge fish but healthy fish being caught. A bunch of different items being used at the lake but the most consistent mentioned is white or green Berkeley tubes, HD Dynamic Ice lures, Kastmasters, spoons and most successful anglers are fishing 16 to 20 feet of water. East Delaney has 18 inches of ice with 2 to 6 inches of snow on top. No recent information shared from East Delaney. Please remember these conditions and ice are changing by the hour with wind, snow and sun. Would you like to know more about spawn-take operations at North Delaney Butte Lake?
Visit the Colorado Outdoors Magazine Blog Post, “Raising Colorado’s Brown Trout - North Delaney Butte Lake”

Dillon Reservoir
As of 2/28/2020, ice reported at 19 inches on various parts of the reservoir with a few feet of snow on top. Cleats are still recommended in areas where snow is not covering the ice and there has also been reports of slush and water on top of the ice so wear waterproof boots. Water is reported as clear and anglers can see down about 5 feet once they drill. Fishing has been slow but tungsten jigs with worms have been working well for trout with a constant jigging motion. Try using pink, chartreuse, or red jigs tipped with wax or meal worms or salmon eggs. Fishing has been reported as the best near the Snake River inlet. Anglers are reporting success catching kokanee but not sure what the best tactic has been.

Green Mountain Reservoir
This a 2,125- acre storage reservoir, is operated by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation as part of the Colorado-Big Thompson project. It provides good fishing for lake trout, rainbow, cutbow, brown trout, and kokanee salmon. Approximately 13 miles south of Kremmling, CO. Colorado Highway 9 runs along the east side of the reservoir. As of 2/14/2020, reports of fish being caught suspended in deep water (over 60 feet of water). Success was also reported fishing around 90 feet of water on marina side if you are willing to do the walk back afterwards. Jigs tipped with sucker meat will catch smaller lakes at this reservoir.

Harvey Gap Reservoir
This reservoir is about 190 surface acres when full. No recent reports submitted. As of 2/8/2020, every species in the reservoir has been caught but the bite is currently slow. Ice conditions are 5-8 inches of ice with 3-4 inches of snow on top. Ice thicknesses vary across the reservoir as a whole, and can vary significantly even a few yards away. Ice rescue stations are located at popular areas around the lake, but nothing can provide for your safety like taking proper precautions and planning and preparing for the unexpected. Recommended items to bring along are ice awls, a life jacket, rope and a fishing buddy.
Lake Granby
Report from the Grand County Fishing Report from Fishing with Bernie. As of 2/24/2020, “slush continues to be an issue, be very careful and have a few friends to help you get out if you are bringing an ATV. Lake trout are fishing well with small plastics tipped with sucker meat. Spoons and bait are also producing. Rainbows are eating small bright jigs tipped with wax worms close to the shorelines.”
www.fishingwithbernie.com
Lake Granby

Lake John
As of 2/26/2020, the lake has 18 to 20 inches of ice with 0-4 inches of snow on top of the ice depending on pockets drifted from wind. Roads are accessible with some drifting near the edges. Yesterday was a great day of fishing but most anglers fishing this lake are still reporting that it is slow. The anglers who are catching fish are catching great size fish. Lake John has a bunch of Stickleback minnows in it right now, which make the trout fat, but also makes them a bit less hungry than normal. Finding an area that has fewer minnows is key to catching instead of just watching. Most successful anglers are fishing shallow waters less than three feet to six feet of water between the weeds and the ice. Everyone is still using something different, yesterday the color red and the color black were successful for most, but this seems to be changing frequently. Mealworms, wax worms, Kastmasters, glow in the dark jig heads, tubes with shrimp oil, and HD Ice Dynamic lures are some of the other frequent items mentioned. Cowdrey capped with 18 to 20 inches of ice. Most anglers reporting no fish movement on cameras or anything being caught. Big Creek is only accessible by snowmobile at this point. Last measurement of ice reported to us was 8 inches with fishing being active. Please remember these conditions and ice are changing by the hour with wind, snow and sun.
Lake John

Roaring Fork River
As of 2/14/2020, fish are still being caught and the water is low and clear. Use stealth when fishing so you do not spook the fish in the area and use light tippet. The primary hatches at this point in time are BWOs and midges. Look for deeper pools and runs where the water is moving at a slower pace to target fish. Streamers will also work on this river and try using smaller one and then transitioning to larger ones if those are not working. There is ice forming on the edges of the river so use caution. The river has entered winter mode and it is important to be aware of ice that has broken off and is floating down the river.
Flows: 467 in Glenwood Springs (2/28/2020)
Roaring Fork River

Stagecoach Reservoir
As of 2/19/2020, the reservoir has more than 15 inches of snow and another 15 inches of ice is some places. Be aware of changing conditions and slush. Anglers are reporting high success with raindrops at the Inlet, Morrison Cove, Keystone Point, and in the Marina area. Successful anglers are primarily reporting luck with PowerBait, night crawlers, spoons, and jigs. Tail Waters Fishing (c/o the Steamboat FlyFisher) on 2/19/2020 - The road to the tailwater is now closed. You can still walk in about 2 miles from the entrance to the park. We have seen great nymphing all day and some fish rising to blue wing olives and midges midday or on any warmer days. Make sure you are using 6x fluorocarbon, micro split shot and small indicators as these fish can be spook. Give a call down to the shop for up to the hour information, (970)879-6552. Nymphs that are working right now are Barr’s Emerger, Zebra Midge, Medallion Midge, Brassie, RS2, BTS nymph, Buck Skin, JuJu Baetis, Scuds, and Bling Midge. Dries that are producing are Pablo’s cripple, Blue Ribbon Foam Baetis, BWO. Streamers to use are Jake’s Leech, Hale Bop Leech, and Slump Buster.
Stagecoach State Park

Vega State Park
As of 2/28/2020, the lake is frozen with approximately a foot of ice near the dam and the Island. Always use caution when accessing the lake as ice depths can vary. Fishing is excellent with anglers reporting catching nice rainbows and cutthroats in the 14 - 17 inch range with ice jigs and mealworms. We have 2 - 3 feet of snow on the ground. The Visitor Center is open daily from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Vega State Park

Williams Fork Reservoir
Report courtesy of the Grand County Fishing Report from Fishing with Bernie. As of 2/24/2020, “14 to 17 inch lake trout are being caught in 50 to 70 feet of water with small 1 to 3 inch plastics tipped with sucker meat. The bite has been decent however, we are starting to see fish come in and follow jigs without biting in heavily fished areas. Wind has moved the snow around the lake this week creating slush-free areas and areas with deep drifted snow and slush.” Sam Hochevar provided this information, a Guide with Fishing with Bernie.
www.fishingwithbernie.com
Williams Fork Reservoir
**Wolford Mountain Reservoir**

This 1550 acre storage reservoir, is owned and operated by the Colorado River Water Conservation District. It provides good fishing for rainbow and brown trout, kokanee salmon and a few other assorted species. It is approximately 5 miles north of Kremmling, CO on US highway 40. As of 2/14/2020, there are reports of 15 inches in some places with an additional 4-8 inches of snow. Use extreme caution near the dam and there are reports of open water. Anglers are having success with extremely small jigs in deeper water.

Wolford Mountain Reservoir

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**Conditions Report - Southwest Colorado**

**Blue Mesa Reservoir**

This is a 9000 acre storage reservoir that offers good fishing for kokanee salmon, brown trout, rainbow trout, and lake trout. Blue Mesa Reservoir is located within Curecanti National Recreation Area. As of 2/28/2020, Colorado Fishing Guides reported 19-plus inches at Lake City Bridge. There is 14-plus inches of ice in Ioloa Basin. Dry creek has 12-plus inches of ice. Elk Creek has 12-plus. Middle Bridge has 8 to 14 inches of ice. Cebolla has 10 to 16 inches and Sapinero basin has 8 to 12 inches. Be safe and do not fish alone if you venture out on this new Blue Mesa ice! “The fishing on Blue Mesa was good this past weekend with the storm moving in but proved to be a little tougher on Monday/Tuesday. We have been having good luck fishing for lake trout in the same deeper depths 40 to 70 feet on flat structures. The browns and rainbows have been found in depths 10 to 25 feet throughout the lake. Sometimes we will get a few rainbows or brown cruising by suspended while we are fishing for lakeys in the deeper water. Kokanee can be found out in the deep channels in groups that are suspended from 20 to 40 feet.” Conditions provided by Irah Wooten with Colorado Fishing Guides.

@GSOFishing  
Blue Mesa

**Crawford Reservoir**

As of 2/8/2020, there have been a few 7-8 pound catfish and a few 28-30 inch pike, caught in the last week. Anglers are also reporting good numbers of perch (some 5-6 inches and others in the 10-inch range). Crappie have been biting on chartreuse jigs, also silver spoons with a mealworm. The trout have been about 12-16 inches. Remember that there is a lake-specific limit on the bass. They must be 18 inches or larger to keep, and you can only keep ONE. Statewide limits pertain to all other species. There are still reports of about 10 inches near the dam, and about 5-6 inches at the end of the Peninsula. The lake level is rising making the ice give way at the shoreline. It is advised to bring a plank in order to get on and off the ice. Please be sure to drill test holes as you make your way out, so you can determine if the ice is safe at your location.

Crawford State Park

**East River**

As of 2/28/2020, double nymphing is the go to setup during this time of year on the East. From the upstream property boundary at the Roaring Judy Fish Hatchery and downstream to the Roaring Judy Hatchery outlet: fishing is only allowed with artificial flies/lures, the taking of kokanee salmon is prohibited, and the bag/possession limit and maximum size for trout is 2 fish that are at least 12 inches in length.

**Flows:** 62.8 (Ice-Affected Reading) CFS at Almont (2/28/2020)

East River

**Jackson Gulch Reservoir - Mancos State Park**

Mancos is a great place for consistent action from trout and yellow perch. Most of the trout action is from 10 to 12 inch fish, but there is very good opportunity at an 18 to 20 inch trout and a few 12 inch plus perch. Great opportunity for kids to catch fish. Most anglers are finding success with bait (PowerBait, salmon eggs, and crawlers) fishing just off bottom or under a slip bobber. For a chance at the yellow perch and trout, a small jig fished under a bobber on a long leader and tipped with a piece of worm is a good bet. As of 2/27/2020, ice is approximately 6 inches near the boat ramp and northeast corner of the dam. Ice thickness is HIGHLY VARIABLE, especially mid-lake. Use caution and check ice thickness with an auger as you proceed on it and move across it. We are seeing consistent action from trout and yellow perch. Most of the trout action is from 10-12 inch fish, but there is good opportunity at an 18 to 20 inch trout and a few 12-plus inch perch. Most perch are 5-inch length neighborhood. Great opportunity for kids to catch fish. Small teardrop jigs tipped with mealworm, waxworms or crawler, small spoons and bare crawlers are catching fish. A small ball of PowerBait on a 1/16oz jig will select for the trout and reduce the number of the very small perch. The perch are excellent eating and even the small ones make nice fish tacos. In the interest of managing their population, we do encourage you to keep them if you will use them. A park pass is required on vehicles in the park. Daily park passes are available at the self-serve pay station at the park entrance. Daily park passes are available at the self-serve pay station at the park entrance.

Jackson Gulch Reservoir
Taylor Park Reservoir
As of 2/28/2020, ice thickness 20-24 inches with 10-16 inches of snow on top. Reports of 2-10 inches of slush in some areas. Fishing for smaller lake trout is typically fair using darker colored tube jigs as close to the bottom as you can jig them. There have been 24 and 30-inch lake trout caught the last couple of weeks. Trout can be caught suspended off the bottom. Look to the east part of the reservoir for pike fishing as there are some large pike present in this reservoir that will slide up shallow as spring approaches.

Taylor Park Reservoir

Conditions Report - Statewide

Now that the end of February is nearing, we have and will continue to notice a shift in fishing conditions. We are seeing lower flows and clear waters. Anglers must be more careful not to spook the fish when approaching the water. Browns will begin to finish spawning for the season at the end of the month, so be cautious of redds when wading along the rivers. With the lack of the waters iced over, anglers are not necessarily restricted to rely on tailwaters. The regulated water flow keeps the tailwaters 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 comprised primarily of midges and an assortment of small blue-winged olive nymphs and occasionally supplemented by larger mayflies, annelids, trout eggs, stoneflies, and caddis larva. Winter fishing typically consists 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, the hatches are much smaller in the winter, 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 are not going to divert too much energy for food, so making sure those flies drift directly in their path is important. Do not use too much split shot because the last thing you 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 - Catching Finicky Fish

During ice fishing season, anglers are presented with many unique opportunities due to some of the limitations that come along with ice fishing. Straight vertical presentations are the name of the game and anglers have the ability to slowly “work” fish that they see on their sonar or on an underwater camera. This is the perfect time for anglers to educate themselves about a variety of fish behaviors such as what attracts a fish closer to investigate a bait or what turns a fish away and scares them. Another fantastic opportunity anglers have is the ability to see when a fish was looking at their bait but just simply would not bite. This allows anglers to make on the fly adjustments to their presentation until they finally dial in what it is the fish want on any given day. One of the best ways to turn those fish that are “just looking” into fish you catch is to downsize your presentation to be more finesse. This is where small tungsten jigs come in to play for many anglers targeting trout or panfish. When the fish are not aggressive enough to bite larger spoons or rattle baits sometimes the ticket to catching fish is being more subtle and a tungsten jig tipped with a waxworm or mealworm fits the bill perfectly for being subtle. The next time you are on the ice and are having trouble getting fish to bite, downsize and catch those fish.

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.