

Fishing Report



Friday March 8th, 2019

News and Information

Upcoming Fishing Tournaments and Events

2019 Fishing Regulations Brochure Now Available

The [2019 Annual Fishing Regulations Brochure is now available online](#) and anglers should begin seeing the brochures in retailers and license agents shortly. Keep an eye on page 1 of the brochure as there have been some changes that are summarized there.

Colorado and Kansas resolve 40-year deadline with the signing of a historic agreement to provide a new source of water in John Martin Reservoir

The long sought compromise between members of the Colorado-Kansas Arkansas River Compact Administration will allow the Lower Arkansas Water Management Association to transfer water from the Highland Canal on the Purgatoire River in Bent County into John Martin Reservoir on behalf of Colorado Parks and Wildlife [to maintain a permanent pool for fishery and recreation purposes.](#)

Summer Reservoir Prep (Safe Boating)

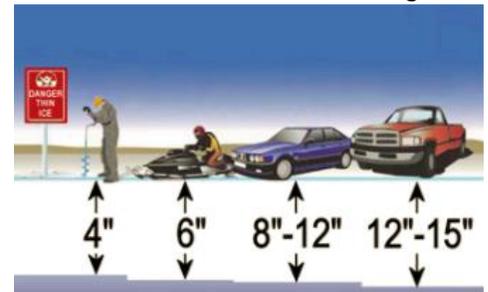
Saturday March 16, 2019 we are in need of 10 hard-working, fun-loving volunteers to help prepare breakwaters, buoys, lines, and docks on both [Eleven Mile and Spinney Mountain Reservoirs.](#)

Ice Safety Tips

There probably is no such thing as “safe” ice, but there are some guidelines anglers should consider. In Colorado, ice conditions can vary from lake to lake. Along the Front Range, it is especially important that anglers check ice conditions before heading out because of the region’s notoriously variable weather conditions. Many of the most popular lakes are within [Colorado State Parks](#) and anglers should check with the specific park staff about ice thickness before heading out.

- Know how to judge ice conditions
- It is always a good idea to drill test holes
- Always have a safety kit (ice chisel or auger, ice picks, nylon rope, wool blanket, thermos of hot liquids, cell phone)
- Be aware of ice covered with snow. Snow acts like a blanket can hide cracked and weak ice or open water.

Read more about Ice Fishing Safety on [Colorado Parks and Wildlife’s Website](#)



	<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
Sands Lake	Southeast	2/25/2019
Confluence Lake	Northwest	2/25/2019
Corn Lake	Northwest	2/25/2019
Old Orchard	Northwest	2/25/2019
Roan's Pothole	Northwest	2/25/2019

Catch of the Week



Grant with a great Arkansas River Brown Trout caught while nymphing a green caddis larva!

Have a fish you're proud of? 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

This 762-acre impoundment is located off of E. Quincy Avenue, two miles east of E-470. As of **3/3/2019**, current ice conditions 0 to 8 inches. The thickest ice is in the back of the coves. Conditions are changing quickly! Large sheets of ice have started breaking off and moving. Two fishermen almost had to be rescued due to this! Plenty of open water along the dam for shore fishing. Trout fishing success varies from slow to fair using meal worms and jigs. Pets are not permitted on the ice! For more information call 303-326-8425. Park hours March 6:30am-8:00pm.

[Aurora Reservoir](#)

Chatfield Reservoir

This 1,356 impoundment is located in Chatfield State Park. As of **3/7/2019**, the lake is iced over with ice thicknesses ranging from 4 to 8 inches. The ice on the south end of the reservoir is more solid and consistent compared to ice on the north end. As always caution is advised any time you are venturing out onto the ice. The edges near shore are beginning to get soft which can make getting off the ice at the end of the day a challenge. Anglers have been reporting sporadic success catching walleye, perch, and smallmouth on the underwater structure near deep water throughout the lake. Minnows seem to be helpful in catching fish recently.

[Chatfield Reservoir](#)

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 **3/5/2019**, ice conditions vary in areas of the lake but average ice thickness is around 4 to 7 inches. As always caution is advised and it is important to carry all safety equipment for a self-rescue if needed. Fishing has been fair for walleye with fish being caught on jigging spoons and Jigging Raps in 13 to 18 feet of water. Keep an eye on the underwater points as the best structure currently holding fish. The walleye bite seems to be best in the last hour before sunset or in the low light dawn hour. Fishing for panfish is fair to good fishing submerged trees or weed beds from 10 to 19 feet of water. Minnows and spoons seem to be most productive, the key is moving around until you find the fish. The best locations are where mudflats give way to deeper water and fishing right on the break lines.

[Cherry Creek Reservoir](#)

Quincy Reservoir

Opened March 1st As of **3/3/2019** Open but closed to boating due to ice conditions. Some open water along the dam now. Restricted to artificial flies and lures only. Only watercraft capable of being launched by hand permitted. Vehicles and trailers are not permitted in the water. For more information call 303-326-8424. Park Hours March 6:30am-8:00pm.

[Quincy Reservoir](#)

Conditions Report - Northeast Colorado

Antero Reservoir

As of **3/5/2019**, ice at the reservoir has been reported between 20 and 24 inches. Fishing remains good for trout in the 16 to 19 inch range. There have also been reports of some much larger fish being caught. Visibility is being reported at about 7 feet. The bite can switch very quickly from lots of action to completely dead.

[Antero Reservoir](#)

Boyd Lake

As of **3/2/2019**, most of the lake is open water although there is still some ice remaining in the marina cove. Most reports are that there is still 4 to 6 inches of ice in the marina but with late ice season extreme caution is advised. Anglers are having success catching bass and smaller walleye through the ice. No recent reports from anyone shore fishing the open water.

[Boyd Lake State Park](#)

Deckers and Cheesman Canyon

As of **3/8/2019**, flows have decreased over the last two weeks and fish are expected to start holding tight to the deeper slow runs that will have open and thus a bit warmer water. Look for 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 is best between 10:00am and 3:00pm.

Flows: 73.1 CFS (3/8/2019)

[Deckers and Cheesman Canyon](#)

Eleven Mile Reservoir

As of **3/7/2019**, the ice is reported at 17 to 23 inches on most areas of the lake with 4 to 6 inches of snow on top. The wind can cause the snow to drift in some areas. Fishing for trout has been very good the bite has definitely moved to an early morning bite, before and as the sun is coming up. The lake was recently stocked so action can be fast and furious. Trout are being caught in many different areas, some fish are being caught in all different water depths, the fish deeper seem to be suspended about 15 feet below the ice. Many different baits have been successful in catching fish. Large tube jigs on the bottom have been working along with spoons for the more aggressive fish. Kokanee Salmon are also being reported as good, look to the deeper waters to find schools of salmon suspended 15 to 35 feet below the ice, some sort of attractant such as a set of cowbells on a jigging machine is important to keep fish in your area. Heavier spoons have been working well, such as Kastmasters or Swedish Pimples. Northern Pike fishing is still sporadic but is expected to pick up closer to the late ice season as the fish will move into the shallows for the spawn.

[Eleven Mile State Park](#)

Jackson Lake

As of **2/28/2019**, the ice thickness is approximately 4 to 8 inches near the dam/outlet. At the boat ramp area there is a very thin ice and at the inlet there is open water. Fishermen are reporting success with jigs and meal worms. Walleye, Crappie and some smaller Wipers are being caught near the pump house. Please use caution on the ice and always carry safety equipment such as a PFD, whistle, ice picks, and a spud bar.

[Jackson Lake State Park](#)

North Sterling Reservoir

As of **3/1/2019**, Ice is being reported at 2 to 5 inches. The lake is about 30% open. Cold temps are expected again this weekend. The lake is nearly full. Fishing report - not enough reports coming in for reliable information since ice conditions are variable. The Reservoir is CLOSED to BOATING. The Inlet is on and the Outlet is off.

[North Sterling Reservoir](#)

St. Vrain Ponds

As of **3/1/2019**, there are 11 fishable ponds at St. Vrain, which 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. Check ice conditions below for updated information. Bald Eagle Pond is artificial flies and lures only. Bald Eagle Pond and Blue Heron Reservoir are trophy bass fisheries: all bass caught on these 2 ponds must be immediately returned to the water! Only 1 catfish in your standard bag and possession limit can exceed 20 inches on Blue Heron Reservoir. Blue Heron has been producing some good sized Black Crappie, Largemouth Bass, and Saugeye on jigs and lures. Trout fishing is very productive in spring and fall depending on stocking. Stocked trout are only 8 to 10 inches in length and we do not recommend keeping them until they have matured and are of a healthy size: around 12 to 24 inches. Overfishing these waters results in smaller, less productive populations.

[St. Vrain State Park](#)

Conditions Report - Southeast Colorado

Arkansas River-Below Lake Pueblo

As of **3/8/2019**, the flows have stabilized and the river is running low, although this is relatively normal for the winter season it can still make fishing tough. The water clarity is fantastic so be sure to use a stealthy approach in an attempt not to spook fish. Look to smaller midges and generalist nymph patterns to be producing. On a warm sunny day do not be afraid to tie on a dry fly and see if you can get some surface action as this tailwater section is known to have sporadic mayfly and trico hatches throughout the winter.

Flows: 32.40 CFS (3/8/2019)

[Lake Pueblo State Park](#)

Arkansas River - Salida to Canon City

As of **3/8/2019**, water temperatures are in the mid 30's and some ice flow is present on the coldest mornings. Clarity has been good upstream of the Vallie Bridge, below Coaldale the conditions deteriorate due to runoff from the Hayden Pass Fire burn scar. The shaded portions of the reservoir have considerable ice shelves. Fishing is productive during the warmest parts of the day nymphing small midge patterns mid water column in the deeper sections and slower runs. Reports are that some anglers are having success with green caddis larva and some smaller golden stonefly nymphs.

Flows: 456 CFS (3/8/2019)

[Upper Arkansas River](#)

Pueblo Reservoir

As of 3/4/2019, the water level is slowly rising and the lake is approximately 65 percent of full pool. Ice has formed in the backs of the coves and some skim ice formed along the dam with the recent cold snap. The ice is not expected to last long as recent water temperatures have been reported in the high 30's near the North Shore Marina. Fishing is expected to continue to pick up as we approach the better spring bites come early to mid April.

[Lake Pueblo State Park](#)

Trinidad Lake State Park

As of 2/20/2019, The lake is at 742 surface acres with a surface elevation of 6185.68. The lake has very little ice left on it and fishing from shore is now possible. No reports from shore fisherman as of yet, fishing is thought to be slow as the open water season begins.

[Trinidad Lake](#)

Conditions Report - Northwest Colorado

Blue River - Silverthorne

As of 3/8/2019, due to the consistent flows and water temperatures that have been recorded recently at this tailwater the fishing has also remained relatively consistent. Look for fish to be holding to the slightly deeper sections. Good flies to use are small, size 18-22, midge as well as Mysis shrimp. A good strategy would be to use a midge and mysis pattern together to garner as much attention from fish as possible. Another key is a small strike indicator that will not spook fish on this heavily fished stretch of river.

Flows: 52.9 CFS (3/8/2019)

[Blue River](#)

Colorado River - Near Kremmling

As of 3/8/2019, winter fishing is the name of the game now on the Colorado. Fish are becoming less active in the cold weather so it is important to fish the warmest part of the day giving the fish a chance to become more active. Ice is starting to affect the well shaded areas of the river so look for runs that receive more sunlight throughout the day. Heavier nymph rigs with Tungsten bead heads are going to get the flies to the fish. Point flies include stoneflies, worms, and egg patterns. Tailing patterns should include your midge and emergers such as Zebra midges and Flashback emergers. It wouldn't be a terrible idea to try to fish a jerk bait slowly for the larger slightly more aggressive fish.

Flows: 417 CFS (3/8/2019)

[Colorado River](#)

Delaney Buttes

As of 2/25/2019, North Delaney: 24 to 26 inches of ice with 6 to 12 inches of snow cover with drifting near the edges.

Fishing feedback seems to be slow.

South Delaney: 22 to 24 inches of ice with 6 to 10 inches of snow cover with drifting near the edges. Feedback on fishing is that south is more active than North Delaney but has definitely slowed since the Delaney's Tournament.

East Delaney: 22 to 24 inches of ice with 6 to 10 inches of snow cover. Feedback on fishing is that fish are very active with most of the fish being caught coming in that 10 to 12 inch range.

[Delaney Buttes](#)

Frying Pan River - Ruedi

As of 3/8/2019, flows have recently stabilized on the Frying Pan near Ruedi Reservoir. Expect the tailwater section to be the most productive during these winter months. Some of the current, hot patterns to try out include Cane midge, black beauty and mysis shrimp in the #20-22 sizes. As with most winter fly fishing allow the fish to warm up a bit and you will be able to fish for the actively foraging trout.

Flows: CFS 64.1 (3/8/2019)

[Frying Pan River](#)

Highline Lake

As of 3/6/2019, the ice is still on the south half of Highline Lake, and the west ramp is iced in. DO NOT venture out on the ice unless you know it is safe! Current rain and warm temperatures should soon begin to thaw the lake. Over 2,600 1.5 pound rainbow trout were stocked into Highline Lake March 4! Hundreds of geese have been spending the winter at the northern end of Highline Lake, near the middle of the lake, so there is open water north of the inlet that extends from the middle of the lake to the east shore. However, the trails you would need to use to get to the open water and fishing are very muddy! Mack Mesa Lake is open water now, except for a small strip of ice between the fishing pier and the southwest corner of the lake. Stocked with over 2,600 new rainbow trout, fishing should be very good!

[Highline Lake State Park](#)

Lake John

As of 2/25/2019, 22 to 24 inches of ice with 6 to 10 inches of snow cover with drifting near the edges. Fishing activity depends on who we talk to, some people doing pretty well and others coming up empty handed. The most success seems to be coming early morning and late evening fishing with very slow periods during the day. Those that are successful are reporting using 1 inch chartreuse tube jigs, blue/silver Kastmaster, 1 to 2 inch Gulp! Minnows and very small glow in the dark jigs tipped with nightcrawlers or waxworms.

[Lake John](#)

Vega Reservoir

As of 3/2/2019, currently anglers are reporting catching rainbows in the 16 - 18 inch range on PowerBait and ice jigs. The lake has approximately two feet of ice, however, please use caution when accessing the ice for fishing. The gravel pit and south road are closed for the season. We have approximately 4 to 5 feet of snow on the ground. The Visitor Center is open 7 days a week from 8:00am to 4:00pm.

[Vega State Park](#)

Conditions Report - Southwest Colorado

Blue Mesa Reservoir

As of 2/24/2019, the entire lake has capped with varying ice conditions from 16 inches to 25 inches thick. Conditions on the surface of the ice are starting to deteriorate with snow and slush making travel tough. Really good reports of trout are coming in and a few lake trout have been caught through the ice in Iola Basin as well as Elk Creek. Anglers are catching trout off of chartreuse colored jigs tipped with mealworms and gold minnow baits at about 10-15 feet of water. Anglers are starting to report some better salmon action in various areas of the lake. Lake trout have been caught in the slightly deeper areas of the lake, look to use tube jigs in the white, pumpkin seed or even green colors to fish for the lake trout. Check in with a local tackle shop to get the latest ice conditions as they will change daily.

[Blue Mesa](#)

Crawford Reservoir

As of 3/3/2019, there have been no recent reports of fish being caught since the ice is starting to deteriorate around the edges, currently there is no safe place to get onto or off of the ice. 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.

[Crawford State Park](#)

Navajo Reservoir

As of 3/8/2019, the lake level is 6015.75 feet and the water temperature at the boat ramp in Arboles is approximately 40 degrees Fahrenheit. The boat ramp is now open 8:00am to 4:00pm daily, however, mud at the bottom of the ramp could cause problems launching for larger boats. Small boats should launch down the center of the ramp to avoid getting stuck in the mud. There have been no recent reports from fisherman as to how the fishing has been.

[Navajo State Park](#)

Taylor Park Reservoir

As of 2/20/2019, the lake is capped with layered ice, anglers are reporting a layer of 3 inches of ice followed by about 4 inches of slush and finally 10 to 12 inches of hard ice. Snow is beginning to make the walk down to the lake from the paved road very difficult unless you are on a snowmobile. Fishing for smaller lake trout has been fair using darker colored tube jigs as close to the bottom as you can jig them. Some trout have been 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

It is still not time to hang up the waders and fly rods. Winter can be one of the most challenging yet rewarding times of the year to fish. Trout throughout the state slow their feeding patterns as the metabolism decreases. Another tough part of winter fishing is less than ideal conditions on the rivers. Flows are low, water temperatures are cold, and water is crystal clear. We are seeing these typical conditions across many of the flowing waters in the state. Tailwaters are still available for fishing and will keep rivers relatively ice free for varied distances downstream. Top release tailwaters are releasing much cooler water so the open water below does not extend very far. Bottom release tailwaters release warmer water in comparison and can keep rivers open for much longer stretches. Statewide we are really starting to see the canyon sections of rivers and streams with a lot of shelf ice that makes fishing very tough. Stretches of rivers that receive more sunlight throughout the day are staying open better but may have some slush flow in the mornings that will dissipate by around 11:00am.

Tip of the Week

How to find active fish

One of the toughest aspects to a successful day of fishing is finding the fish that are actively feeding in whatever body of water you are targeting. One fantastic way to find active fish during the early spring on smaller ponds or reservoirs is called "Power Fishing." This technique is widely used by bass anglers looking to quickly learn a new body of water. Power fishing is using large attention attracting baits in order to trigger reaction strikes from fish that are active and willing to feed. Another important factor to this technique is using baits that are able to cover a lot of water quickly. Examples of baits that fit this bill are top water baits such as poppers or buzz baits. Another option would be spinner baits that can be fished subsurface. The combination of being able to trigger strikes from fish that are slightly more active and cover water quickly makes this a "one-two punch" for finding the areas holding active fish where anglers can then slow down and move to more finesse presentations to catch as many fish as possible in a given day.

Have a suggestion or request?

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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.



DNR Fish Reporter