

# Fishing Report



Friday March 22nd, 2019

## News and Information

### Upcoming Fishing Tournaments and Events

Beginning in April, the CPW Fishing Report will be published weekly! Keep your eyes out for the latest on our [CPW Fishing App](#), [Email Blast](#), and our [website](#).

### 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 Parks and Wildlife researching walleye at southwest Colorado reservoir

In the ongoing effort to provide more sport-fishing opportunities for anglers, Colorado Parks and Wildlife is conducting a [research project on walleye that have been stocked into Narraguinnep Reservoir](#) in southwest Colorado.

### Highline Lake officially open to boaters

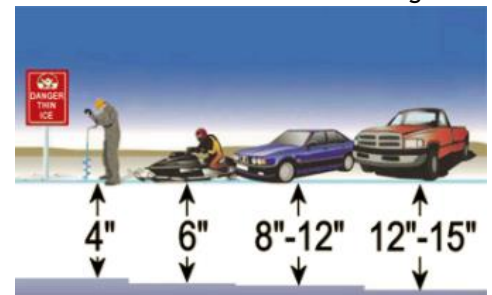
Though slightly delayed by weather this season, [Colorado Parks and Wildlife has opened the water at Highline Lake](#) State Park to boating and other water recreation. Get your boats and fishing gear ready!

### 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](#)



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	<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 <a href="http://facebook.com/ColoradoParksandWildlife/">facebook.com/ColoradoParksandWildlife/</a>.</p>
	<p>Fish with us on Twitter          Colorado anglers can get updates directly from CPW on Twitter. Follow <a href="#">@COParksWildlife</a>.</p>

# Stocking Report

Body of Water	Region	Report Date
<a href="#">Parachute Ponds</a>	Northwest	3/4/2019
<a href="#">Highline Lake</a>	Northwest	3/4/2019
<a href="#">Fruita Red Rocks Lake</a>	Northwest	3/4/2019
<a href="#">Mack Mesa Lake</a>	Northwest	3/4/2019
<a href="#">Runyon Lake</a>	Southeast	3/5/2019
<a href="#">Fountain Lake</a>	Southeast	3/5/2019
<a href="#">Corn Lake</a>	Northwest	3/6/2019
<a href="#">Confluence Lake</a>	Northwest	3/6/2019
<a href="#">Eleven Mile Reservoir</a>	Northeast	3/6/2019
<a href="#">Anticline Lake</a>	Southeast	3/7/2019
<a href="#">Arkansas River</a>	Southeast	3/7/2019
<a href="#">Quail Lake</a>	Southeast	3/11/2019
<a href="#">Prospect Lake</a>	Southeast	3/11/2019
<a href="#">Lon Hagler</a>	Northeast	3/11/2019 & 3/12/2019
<a href="#">Old Orchard</a>	Northwest	3/12/2019
<a href="#">Roan's Pothole</a>	Northwest	3/12/2019
<a href="#">Corn Lake</a>	Northwest	3/12/2019
<a href="#">Palisade Riverbend Park Pond</a>	Northwest	3/13/2019
<a href="#">Harvey Gap Reservoir</a>	Northwest	3/14/2019
<a href="#">Martin Reservoir</a>	Southeast	3/14/2019
<a href="#">Horseshoe Reservoir</a>	Southeast	3/14/2019
<a href="#">Sloans Lake</a>	Southeast	3/15/2019

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## Catch of the Week



Steven took advantage of the open water landing this northern pike at Totten Reservoir!

Have a fish you're 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

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## Conditions Report - Metro

### Aurora Reservoir

This 762-acre impoundment is located off of E. Quincy Avenue, two miles east of E-470. Closed to boating due to ice conditions. Could be another weeks or two before we open for boating. When closed to boating this also includes all hand launched watercraft. As of 3/17/2019, the only ice that remains is in the coves. Ice conditions are poor. Plenty of open water for shore fishing along the east and west end of the dam. Trout fishing success varies from slow to fair using PowerBait Some nice size trout have been caught off the dam. 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 3/22/2019, the lake is starting to have open water with the warmer weather. There is ice from the swim beach, south is still mostly iced with about 10 feet of open water between shore and ice. With warmer weather ice conditions are expected to deteriorate quickly. 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. Shore anglers reported success catching walleye bouncing jigs off of the bottom. Be aware walleye spawn operations are taking place.

[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 3/20/2019, 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. Approximately 25% of the reservoir is open water. 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 1<sup>st</sup> As of 3/17/2019 Open but closed to boating due to ice conditions. Could be another week or two before we can open to boating. Plenty of open water for shore anglers. Restricted to artificial flies and lures only. Only watercraft capable of being launched by hand permitted. Vehicles and trailers 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 3/20/2019, ice at the reservoir has still 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 3/19/2019, water temperature was at 36 degrees and fishing reported fair to good for bluegill and trout. Trout reportedly caught with wax worms and jigs near the marina. Fishing for walleye is fair using live bait near the marina. As of 3/16/2019 Boyd Lake is open to boating. The main boat ramp and Heron Cover (north) ramp are open for launching. Boat Inspectors will be available at the ANS Inspection Station from 8:00 am - 6:00 pm during the month of March.

Decontamination hours are 9:00 am - 5:00 pm.

[Boyd Lake State Park](#)

## Deckers and Cheesman Canyon

As of 3/20/2019, flows have increased with the releasing of water from Cheesman Reservoir. Look for small midges and emerger patterns to be productive in the open runs and deeper pools. Also try smaller slow riffles in the warming afternoon. 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: 91.2 CFS (3/20/2019)

[Deckers and Cheesman Canyon](#)

## Eleven Mile Reservoir

As of 3/17/2019, the ice is reported at 20 to 30 inches on most areas of the lake with 2 to 4 inches of snow on top. Report from Park Rangers measured ice depth at 34 inches at 170 yards out. 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 3/17/2019, skim ice develops nightly but burns off during the day. There is still a section of unsafe ice at the face of the dam. The inlet is currently open flowing at 55cfs. Fishing has been slow so far. Boat ramp is currently closed but once a date has been confirmed Jackson Lake will post the information and update the phone message.

[Jackson Lake State Park](#)

## North Sterling Reservoir

As of 3/20/2019, the lake is about 50% open due to warmer weather and winds. 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 3/20/2019, there are 11 fishable ponds at St. Vrain, which are stocked on a regular basis. Ponds are reported by park staff to be completely ice free and fishing has been good. 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 3/20/2019, 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 3/21/2019, water temperatures are in the mid 30's to low 40'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 has been most productive between 10 am and 4 pm. Midges are the most abundant food source on the river right now. However, baitis nymphs, crane fly larva and caddis larva have been sampled in this section as well. During the warmer parts of the day fish are being found in the shallows to feed.

Flows: 778 CFS (3/21/2019)

[Upper Arkansas River](#)

### **Pueblo Reservoir**

As of 3/22/2019, the water level and temperatures continue to rise. Average water temperatures during mid-day range from low to mid 40's. Fishing is expected to continue to pick up as we approach the better spring bites come early to mid-April. Boat Ramp/Inspection Station hours are currently 6am - 7 pm.

[Lake Pueblo State Park](#)

### **Trinidad Lake State Park**

As of 3/14/2019, The lake is at 753 surface acres with a surface elevation of 6186.72. The lake has very little ice left on it and fishing from shore is now possible. South shore anglers are catching trout on jigs tipped with meal worms or shrimp while there was ice. Depth of water ranging from 5-20ft. A few walleye and perch are being reported. Dough bait, PowerBait, and worms have been the go to for shore anglers. Trout 12-15 inches are being caught. In Reilly Canyon, the river has thawed and there is no ice in the inlet. Boating is CLOSED for the season. New Zealand Mud Snails have been located in the lake.

[Trinidad Lake](#)

## **Conditions Report - Northwest Colorado**

### **Blue River - Silverthorne**

As of 3/21/2019, 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 and coming to the shallows to feed during the warmer parts of the day. Good flies to use are small, size 18-22, midge as well as Mysis shrimp. Success has been reported using dry flies such as extended blue wing olives 18-22 and streamers such as wholly buggers. 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: 79.7 CFS (3/21/2019)

[Blue River](#)

### **Colorado River - Near Kremmling**

As of 3/21/2019, 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: 453 CFS (3/21/2019)

[Colorado River](#)

### **Delaney Buttes**

As of 3/12/2019, North Delaney: 20 to 24 inches of ice with 2 to 8 inches of snow cover with drifting near the edges. Fishing feedback seems to be slow.

South Delaney: 19 to 23 inches of ice with 4 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 slowed.

East Delaney: 19 to 24 inches of ice with 3 to 10 inches of snow cover. Feedback on fishing is that the fishing is slowing down with South being slightly more active and the East being the most active.

[Delaney Buttes](#)

### **Frying Pan River - Ruedi**

As of 3/21/2019, flows have recently stabilized on the Frying Pan near Ruedi Reservoir. Expect the tailwater section to be the most productive during these winter months. With warmer weather fish have been rising during the warmest parts of the day. Success has been reported using zebra and money midge set ups. Water is very clear so be sure to use a stealthy approach so that you do not spook fish.

Flows: CFS 49.7 (3/21/2019)

[Frying Pan River](#)

### **Highline Lake**

As of 3/12/2019, 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 3/12/2019, Area Lakes are still pushing about 22-24 inches of good ice, however if you hit one of the sunny, warmer days, the top several inches will be slush by mid-morning. All of these lakes have roughly 10-14 inches of snow on top of the ice and then that layer of slush under the snow. Main roads are presently in great condition, however you can expect entrance roads and parking areas adjacent to the lakes to get sloppy and even muddy due to the melting while things warm up as the day progresses. Since last weekend when we received 20 inches of snow, vehicles are no longer traveling Lake John's surface, but this past weekend it was all ATV's and snow machines. The road to the south end of the lake has drift shut this past week and ends roughly after camper row (pavilions). If the bite does happen to be slow, change your presentation and depth until you encounter your quarry. Lately, the target has had a liking for an atomic teaser or lure with a piece of meat. Meal worms, night crawlers or a wedge of shrimp are all good choices.

[Lake John](#)

### **Vega Reservoir**

As of 3/16/2019, due to snow levels, Fisherman's Flats and Oak Point campground are no longer accessible. The Island and Angler's Stairwell are currently the only ways to access the lake. 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 - 5 feet of snow on the ground. The Visitor Center is open 7 days a week from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

[Vega State Park](#)

# Conditions Report - Southwest Colorado

## Blue Mesa Reservoir

As of 3/16/2019, the entire lake is capped with varying ice conditions from 16 inches to 24 inches thick. New snow has crusted over and is hard in the mornings but tends to soften up in the afternoon sun. Really good reports of trout are coming in and a few lake trout have been caught through the ice in Lola 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 3/20/2019, there have been no reports of fish being caught since the ice started 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 3/18/2019, the lake level is 6020.07 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. Boats should launch down the center of the ramp to avoid getting stuck in the mud. There have been some northern pike and brown trout caught recently.

[Navajo State Park](#)

# 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?

Email us at [dnr\\_fish.reporter@state.co.us](mailto: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.

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**COLORADO**

Parks and Wildlife

Department of Natural Resources

DNR Fish Reporter