News and Information

Upcoming Fishing Tournaments and Events

COVID-19 Update - 4/10/20 9:45 a.m.
Update April 9, 2020: Colorado counties, municipalities, and land management agencies continue to update their COVID-19 guidance including travel restrictions, road closures, and access limitations on a regular basis. Colorado Parks and Wildlife reminds anglers, hunters, and all other outdoor recreationists that it is your responsibility to research and understand the specific guidance, ordinances and restrictions in place for any planned local recreation - know before you go.

Up-to-date COVID-19 Information found here:

CPW extends expiration date for state park passes and off-highway vehicle registration renewals
On March 25, 2020, Governor Jared Polis signed an executive order authorizing the Director of Colorado Parks and Wildlife to extend the expiration date of certain licenses, passes, permits, certificates and registrations for up to 30 days. To better serve our customers, Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) is extending the expiration date for the following products, effective immediately:

- Off-highway vehicle (OHV) registrations and permits scheduled to expire March 31, 2020 are now valid through April 30, 2020.
- State Park annual passes, annual family passes, Aspen Leaf annual passes and Columbine annual passes are valid for 30-days after the initial expiration date. For example, passes that expire in April 2020 are now valid through May 31, 2020. This 30-day extension is limited to passes with an original printed expiration date of March 2020 or April 2020.

CPW’s Aquatic Nuisance Species inspections underway in 2020

ANS boat inspections and COVID-19
As the final winter frosts begin to thaw, reservoirs are opening to boating and Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) officials are busy ramping up inspection stations for the upcoming season. Boat inspections for aquatic nuisance species (ANS) are mandatory in Colorado and required for motorized or trailered watercraft entering the state and prior to launching on most public waters within the state.

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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<th>Region</th>
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<td>St. Vrain Pelican</td>
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<td>Sheldon Lake</td>
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### Catch of the Week

Ice season will soon be behind us. That did not stop Jeanette from landing this gorgeously colored specimen.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Region</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Rampart Reservoir</td>
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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 **4/4/2020**, Aurora Reservoir is open to boating (restricted to electric motors). The water temperature was recently recorded at 40 degrees. Fishing for trout from shore has been slow to fair using PowerBait; however, fly anglers have been reporting more success. Anglers should look for trout in shallow water at this time of the year. Walleye action has slow to fair. For more information, call 303-326-8425. Park Hours for April: 6:00am - 8:30pm.  
[Aurora Reservoir](https://www.parks.state.co.us/aurora reservoir)

**Chatfield Reservoir**  
This 1,356 impoundment is located in Chatfield State Park. As of **4/10/2020**, Chatfield Reservoir is open to boating. There have been several reports of high visitation rates. Increased visitors and anglers puts addition pressure on the fish, reservoir, and park staff and makes fishing more difficult. Anglers wanting to fish Chatfield should be advised to either arrive early or stay late for the best chances to find fish. A recent report indicated that water temperature was recorded at 50 degrees.  
[Chatfield Reservoir](https://www.parks.state.co.us/chatfield reservoir)

**Cherry Creek Reservoir**  
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 **4/9/2020**, boating is open at Cherry Creek Reservoir and some anglers have taken advantage. One angler noted that they had the most successful while trolling with a lead core line with a flicker shad. Another angler reported that water temperature recently measured at 50 degrees.  
[Cherry Creek State Park](https://www.parks.state.co.us/cherry creek state park)

**Quincy Reservoir**  
As of **4/4/2020**, trout fishing at Quincy Reservoir has been slow to fair. Some success has been achieved with spoons and spinners. Bass fishing has been good at times but has been impacted by cold fronts. Some anglers have reported success using jigs to catch smallmouth bass from the dam. The reservoir is restricted to artificial flies and lures only. Only watercraft capable of being launched by hand are permitted. Vehicles and trailers are not permitted in the water. Park Hours for April: 6:00am-8:30pm. For more information, call 303-326-8424  
[Quincy Reservoir](https://www.parks.state.co.us/quinsey reservoir)

Conditions Report - Northeast Colorado

**Antero Reservoir**  
As of **4/7/2020**, ice conditions are deteriorating at Antero Reservoir. However, one angler noted that there is still ice between 10 and 12 inches near the south ramp. Meanwhile, ice near the shoreline has become rotten. Despite these conditions, reports indicated that the few anglers fishing on the ice had some success using sucker meat on small tube jigs in the morning and mealworms as the day warms up. Anglers should use extreme caution if they decide to venture out on Antero Reservoir. Conditions are always subject to change and anglers should use extreme caution.  
[Antero Reservoir](https://www.parks.state.co.us/antero reservoir)

**Eleven Mile Reservoir**  
Report from the Eleven Mile Marina Weekly Fishing Report. As of **4/7/2020**, “the lake is approximately 85% ice covered. There is lots of fishable shoreline as the ice has receded. Conditions change constantly, as it is springtime in the Rockies. Calling ice season over.”  
[https://www.11milesports.com/fishing-report](https://www.11milesports.com/fishing-report)  
[Eleven Mile State Park](https://www.parks.state.co.us/eleven mile state park)

**Spinney Mountain Reservoir**  
As of **4/6/2020**, Spinney Mountain Reservoir is closed to both boating and fishing. There has been no date set for the reopening of the park and reservoir to the public.  
[Spinney Mountain Reservoir](https://www.parks.state.co.us/spinney mountain reservoir)
St. Vrain State Park
As of 4/9/2020, there have been mixed reports coming from the ponds at St. Vrain State Park. Some anglers and park staff have reported that fishing has been great. Meanwhile, other anglers have reported that fishing has been slow on some ponds but they also noted to expect activity to improve as ambient and water temperatures continue to rise.

St. Vrain State Park Conditions Report

Arkansas River - Leadville to Buena Vista
Information provided by Daniel Haan with Ark Anglers. *Please note: “Chaffee County has restricted tourism and leisure traffic to the county. County locals are encouraged to recreate responsibly, but anyone outside of the county is encouraged to stay home under the current circumstances.” As of 4/9/2020, “it finally feels like spring on the upper river. Though midges are still the most available food above Buena Vista, we are getting some reports of sporadic blue winged olive activity in the afternoons, which should get more consistent as we progress through April. Activity to the north is a couple weeks behind what we are seeing in Salida. The upper basin sees less angling traffic in the spring because of this. Good searching rigs through the day would be a stonefly nymph/midge pupa combo in the morning and an attractor nymph/mayfly nympha combo in the afternoons, subsurface unless you are seeing fish feed on the surface. Expect fish to still be near winter water, but definitely moving out to occupy pockets and riffles as food is available there.”
Flows: 90 CFS at Hayden Meadows, 111 CFS at Granite (4/9/2020)
http://www.arkanglers.com/
Arkansas River

Arkansas River - Salida to Canon City
Information provided by Braden Baker with Ark Anglers. *Please note: “Chaffee County has restricted tourism and leisure traffic to the county. County locals are encouraged to recreate responsibly, but anyone outside of the county is encouraged to stay home under the current circumstances.” As of 4/9/2020, “we are finally seeing strong blue winged olive hatches in both the middle basin and the lower basin below Salida, bringing with them some great dry fly fishing opportunities, especially on cloudy days. As we proceed through April, you will find fish dispersed throughout the river, and increasingly moving into riffles to forage on drifting insects. Blue winged olives are probably the most important food right now, particularly in the afternoons. You will want to keep some dun and emerger patterns handy to cover an emergence from here on out (Parachute Adams, Guiler Special, Sprout Baetis, Bat-wing Emergers, Barr Emergers, Jujubaetis, etc. in #16-18). Any pheasant tail imitation (#16-18) will cover your baetis nymphs. Immature stonefly nymphs (#10-12), caddis larva (#14-18), and midge larva/pupa (#18-20) are especially effective in the morning before any hatch activity takes place. Caddis larva are more and more active as we progress through April, and we anticipate seeing our Mother's Day caddis hatch to begin as usual, near April 15 down in Bighorn Sheep Canyon. 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: 220 CFS at Wellsville (4/5/2020)
http://www.arkanglers.com/
Arkansas River

John Martin Reservoir
As of 4/9/2020, fishing activity on John Martin Reservoir has slowly continued to warm up. Water temperature was reported to be consistently in the low 50’s. Increased action has been reported among several species, including wiper, crappie, and smallmouth bass. Anglers can entice crappie and smallmouth bass using jigs along shorelines or structures. However, anglers have found the most activity while targeting trout. Also, head to Lake Hasty on the east side of the reservoir for great fishing opportunities as well.
John Martin Reservoir

Lake Pueblo
As of 4/10/2020, Lake Pueblo is open to boating and fishing. For the month of April, the ANS inspection station on the North Ramp is open daily from 6:00 am to 8:00 pm. The decontamination station is also open daily from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm. Fishing has been reported as slow on Lake Pueblo. The water temperature was recently reported at 48 degrees. Park staff and visitors have commented on the high volume of visitors to the park, making access to parking and good fishing spots competitive.
Pueblo Reservoir
Trinidad Lake
As of 4/10/2020, Trinidad Lake fishing has slowed down. Fishing has not necessarily stalled because of reluctant fish but because of high winds on the lake. Park staff report that there have been few anglers on the water fighting recent gusts up to 30 mph. The weather service is forecasting a continuation of windy conditions for the near future and snow across the weekend and into early next week. By Wednesday, conditions should calm with highs in the 50's and a light breeze throughout the morning. When conditions on the surface turn favorable, anglers have been successful attracting trout with PowerBait. Besides trout, staff reported that there has been little action with Walleye.

Trinidad Lake

Conditions Report - Northwest Colorado

Lake Granby
As of 4/4/2020, Lake Granby has some remaining ice. An angler noted that they measured 12 inches of clear ice, 4-6 inches of cloudy ice, 2 inches of hard crust, and another 2 inches of snow. Like all lakes across the state, these conditions are subject to change due to warming ambient temperatures. Use extreme caution whenever on frozen lakes. Fishing on Lake Granby was reported as productive. Fish can be found suspended at various levels of the water column. Anglers reported that they were receiving bites using small tungsten jigs tipped with sucker and salmon eggs.

Lake Granby

Lake John
As of 4/4/2020, reports indicate that ice conditions have deteriorated on Lake John. Lake John Resort reported that the lake retains ice between 0-14 inches thick. The shoreline ice has become very thin across the lake and it is unsafe to access the ice. As always, please use caution. While the shorelines have begun to open, there is not enough open water to fish from shore. Because of these conditions, there are few anglers traveling to Lake John and little updated fishing information to report.

https://lakejohnresort.com/fishing
Lake John

Rifle Gap Reservoir
As of 4/9/2020, the boat ramp at Rifle Gap Reservoir has opened for the season. Park Staff note that there has been an unseasonably high volume of visitors to the reservoir. There have been reports of anglers having success targeting trout and northern pike. The ANS inspection station is open seven days a week from 8 am to 4 pm.

Rifle Gap Reservoir

Roaring Fork River - Aspen to Basalt
Report from the Taylor Creek Fly Shop fishing report. As of 4/8/2020, “the river is now open from bank to bank and most ice has dissipated as of this week. We are not seeing a ton of dry fly action, but streamer fishing and nymphing has been quite productive. Small worms, stones and princes make great lead flies and follow them up with RS2s or various midge larva.” Suggested flies include: NYMPHS BLM 18-20, Tungsten Bead Baetis 20, BTS Baetis 20-22, Sparklewings RS2 20-22, Freestone Emerger 20, BH Polywing Emerger 20, Kingrey's Cap'n Hook 20-22, Bead Wing Midge 20-22, Rojo Midge 20-22, Spanflex Stone 10-12, Tungsten Split Case PMD 16-18, PMD Halfback Emerger 14-18. STREAMERS: Autumn Splendor 6, Zuddler 6, Slumpies 6-8

Roaring Fork River
Vega State Park

As of 4/7/2020, Vega State Park staff reported that Vega Lake is frozen over with approximately 1 - 2 feet of ice near the dam and the Island. However, warmer temperatures are starting to soften the shorelines by afternoon. You can still access the lake for ice fishing at Angler's Stairwell, and the Island. Always use caution when accessing the lake as ice depths can vary. Fishing continues to be excellent. Anglers report catching rainbow and cutthroat trout in the 14 - 17 inch range with ice jigs and mealworms. There remains approximately one foot of snow on the ground."

Steamboat Lake

As of 4/9/2020, park staff report that fishing has not slowed down on Steamboat Lake. The lake has continued to be highly productive and some anglers reported catching bigger than usual fish. Anglers have had lots of success by while using tube jigs and other small jigs. The ice has continued to be solid at 2 ½ to 3 feet. Shoreline ice has become soft or receded in some areas. Be especially careful while accessing the ice.

Roaring Fork - Basalt to Carbondale

Report from the Taylor Creek Fly Shop fishing report. As of 4/8/2020, “the river looks great around Basalt this week, and has been fishing well to boot. Do not fret if you see a little discoloration in the coming weeks, this is just your cue to tie on a San Juan Worm or stonefly nymph! Like the upper, we are not seeing a ton of dry fly activity, but the nymphing has been terrific once you get your appropriate fly in the right kind of water. The fish are fat and seem to have fed well through the winter months, and where you find one fish there is bound to be more. Treat the Fork as you would the Fryingpan for a little while longer- as in small flies and light tippets. Covering water is a great idea versus standing in one spot all day. If it is a cool day, start on the Fork down-valley and work your way up as the day warms.” Suggested flies include: Nymphs BLMs 18-20, Prince nymphs 18-20, Pheasant Tails 18-24, Freestone Emerger 20, BH Polywing Emerger 18-20, Biot Baetis 18-20, Sparklewing RS2 20-22, Tailwater Assassin 20-22, Imposter 20-22, Lil Foamy 18-20, Neon Nightmare 20-22, Cat Poop 8-12, 20 Incher 10-14.

Roaring Fork River

Steamboat Lake

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Vega State Park

Roaring Fork - Carbondale to Glenwood

Report from the Taylor Creek Fly Shop fishing report. As of 4/8/2020, “in a nutshell, the lower Roaring Fork is on fire! April is a special time around here and this year is no different. The transitions of longer and warmer days seem to get the fish out of their winter funk and push them back into that proverbial “feed bag.” Blue Wings are blanket-hatching, plus some thick midge hatches below Carbondale as we warm up around here. Like always, overnight temperatures are more of a “fishiness factor” than daytime temperatures. Once we are out of the teens at night, which we pretty much are, it is game on out there. Nymphs of note are worms and princes trailed with Tungsten Bead Baetis or RS2s; play around with sizes and colors until you dial the fish in. Streamers are good right now too, do not overlook purple!” Suggested flies include: Nymphs: BLMs 18-20, Freestone Emerger 20, RS2s 20-22, Polywing Emerger 18-20, Biot Baetis 18-20, Thread Body Baetis 18-20, Soft Hackle BWO 20-22, Imposters 20-22, Cat Poop 8-12, San Juan Worm 10. Dries: Perfect Baetis 20-22, No Hackle Baetis 20-22, Roy's Special Fryingpan Emerger 20-22, CDC Comparadun 18-20, Hatching Midge 20-22, HOH CDC Spent Midge 22-24, HOH CDC Midge Adult 24, Morgans Midge 18-20, Sprout Midge 18-20, Skittering Zelon Midge 20-22, Griffiths Gnat 20.

Flows: 440 CFS in Glenwood Springs
Roaring Fork River
Conditions Report - Southwest Colorado

**Animas River - Durango**
As of **4/9/2020**, the Animas at Durango has been showing the signs of the impending spring runoff. Warmer weather has brought more snowmelt and sediment down the river creating high discharge and murky conditions. While this transition does not bode well for the Animas, fishing nearby standing bodies of water has begun to become active. Warm water species will begin to come alive within southwest Colorado lakes.

**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. *Please note, Gunnison County has implemented travel restrictions that may limit your ability to access the reservoir. See the county’s [website](#) for more information before planning your fishing trip.* As of **4/10/2020**, Blue Mesa Reservoir is transitioning to open water season. Many reports indicate that the water has not fully opened up; however, what ice does remain is unfit for any ice fishing. As of right now, anglers can fish the open waters along the shoreline.

**Jackson Gulch Reservoir - Mancos State Park**
As of **4/2/2020**, park staff report that “the lake has fully melted and is fishable from shore. Trout are rising occasionally and should be catchable with small jigs and streamers. Standard baits under a bobber: PowerBait, ‘crawlers, waxworms, and mealworms will work for both trout and yellow perch. Most yellow perch are small but this can be a great time of year to catch some of the larger perch. In addition, boat ramp is closed due to low water and COVID-19 related limitations. Boating is restricted to inspection-exempt hand launching.”

**Navajo Lake**
As of **4/9/2020**, fishing for Northern Pike has been the most productive. Park staff reported that while Northern Pike fishing has been active, crappie, catfish, and bass fishing have all been slow. The weather has been mostly clear and breezy recently with daily highs in the 60’s and lows around freezing. Colorado’s Navajo State Park remains open for day use only, including the lake and boat ramp. The closure of Navajo Lake State Park in New Mexico has been extended until April 30th. The park’s closure starts at the Colorado/New Mexico state line.
Conditions Report - Statewide

It appears that ice fishing has nearly dissipated from Colorado. While there may be many high elevation lakes still frozen over, the majority of popular ice fishing lakes are have transitioned to open water fishing. Meanwhile, spring has brought some activity (slowly in some areas) among warm water species such as walleye, crappie, and bass. The opening of boat season in many lakes across the state adds expanded opportunities for anglers to attract fish as well. Most notably, boating season opens up the opportunity to begin trolling deeper waters and accessing the entire lake in search of hungry fish. Meanwhile, many fly fishers across the state continue to enjoy the winter-spring shoulder season when the weather has turned warm in lower elevations but the rivers have yet to be blown out and murky from spring runoff. The shoulder season gives fly fishers the opportunity to target rising fish with dry flies where hatches of Blue Winged Olive, Midges, March Brown, and Mother’s Day Caddis are occurring. The increase of dry fly action may be fun but should not overshadow nymphing as the best way to attract fish in early spring.

Tip of the Week - Taking advantage of optimal flows

This early spring season when the weather begins to warm, water temperatures begin to warm, and flows remain low in creeks and streams throughout the state is the time to be on the water. Anglers in Colorado are given a short window to take advantage of early spring Mayfly hatches and great fishing before the late spring runoff kicks into full force. Although when spring snowstorms roll through fishing can be at the bottom of many peoples to-do list of activities it is important not to overlook this time of year. One of the major benefits to fishing this special buffer season is the rivers tend to be a bit less crowded and sections that were dominated by shelf ice a couple weeks prior are opening up and provide great water to fish. Keep this in mind and the next free chance you get take advantage of optimal flows and good water clarity to get your fishing fix before runoff makes fishing much more difficult and technical.

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

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

DNR Fish Reporter