

Fishing Report



Friday December 6th, 2019

News and Information

Upcoming Fishing Tournaments and Events

Big Brown Trout in Colorado

Every year, Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) fishery biologists set up a spawn-take operation for brown trout at North Delaney Butte Lake near Walden, CO. Biologists capture brown trout and collect more than a million eggs, which are shipped to CPW hatcheries. Once hatched and raised, the brown trout are restocked in waters throughout the state. North Delaney is the primary source of brown trout eggs in Colorado. Although they are non-native, brown trout are some of the most popular fish among anglers. [Click this link to see the featured video!](#)

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. The following ice safety tips can prevent a mistake from becoming fatal:

- Never go onto the ice alone. Keep a buddy close by so that they can call for help if you fall in. Also, never attempt to walk out onto the ice to rescue someone; you might also fall through the ice.
- Avoid alcoholic beverages. Alcohol increases the likelihood of hypothermia, which is the loss of body temperature.
- Always wear a life jacket. Wear a life jacket or personal flotation device (PFD) over winter clothing. Life jackets provide excellent flotation and protection from hypothermia.
- Assemble a personal safety kit including an ice pick, a rope, and a whistle to call for help. Always wear the safety kit on your body when going out onto the ice.
- Always keep pets on a leash. Never allow your dog to run out onto the ice and never walk your dog near a frozen lake or pond without a leash. If your dog falls through the ice, do not attempt a rescue. Go for help.
- Reach-Throw-Go. If you can’t reach the person from shore, throw them a flotation device or a rope. If you still can’t help the person quickly, go for help.

Read more about Ice Fishing Safety at:

<http://cpw.state.co.us/learn/Pages/IcefishingSafety.aspx>

Tightline Outdoors Ice Addiction series Boyd Lake January 18th, Jackson Lake State Park February 1st, and Grand Lake February 22nd.

	<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
Boyd Lake	Northeast	11/18/2019
Douglass Reservoir	Northeast	11/18/2019
Harvey Gap Reservoir	Northwest	11/18/2019
Rifle Gap Reservoir	Northwest	11/18/2019
Karval Reservoir	Southeast	11/18/2019
Hugo WA Pond #6	Southeast	11/18/2019
Hugo WA Pond #5	Southeast	11/18/2019
Hugo WA Pond #2	Southeast	11/18/2019
Kinney Lake	Southeast	11/18/2019
Boyd Lake	Northeast	11/19/2019
Lon Hagler Reservoir	Northeast	11/19/2019
Mack Mesa Lake	Northwest	11/19/2019
Highline Lake	Northwest	11/19/2019
Trinidad Central Park Lake	Southeast	11/19/2019
Trinidad Reservoir	Southeast	11/19/2019
Fountain Lake	Southeast	11/20/2019
Runyon Lake	Southeast	11/20/2019
Quail Lake	Southeast	11/22/2019
Willow Springs Pond #2	Southeast	11/22/2019

Catch of the Week



Shane caught this beautiful kokanee salmon (*Oncorhynchus nerka*) on the South Platte River!

Have a fish you are 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 **12/06/2019**, the reservoir is **closed to boating which includes all hand launched watercraft such as canoes, kayaks, float tubes etc.** Trout fishing from shore has been really good lately! Best areas have been from the dam using PowerBait from a slip rig and bright colored spoons and spinners. Some nice size rainbows in the 16 to 20 inch ranges have been caught recently. For more information call 303-326-8425.

[Aurora Reservoir](#)

Chatfield Reservoir

This 1,356 impoundment is located in Chatfield State Park. As of **12/04/2019**, reports that the reservoir is anywhere from 60 to 75% capped with skim ice but the recent increase in temperatures may have melted some. The walleye bite has tailed off and will probably be about done here soon for the season. A few reports are still coming in with some catches but they have been few and far between lately. The bass fishing has remained decent but it also is coming to its end. The smallmouths will be found in their typical stomping grounds. The trout bite is what has really picked up lately and should continue to be decent as we head into ice fishing season. **Chatfield State Park is now CLOSED to all forms of boating including Paddle Boards and Kayaks. Thank you for a great season!**

[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 **12/06/2019**, not much new for Cherry Creek. The fishing has been reported as fair and the walleye bite is wrapping up like the rest of the metro reservoirs. Some walleye can still be caught using shallow reactionary bite techniques but the fishing will most likely be inconsistent. Some reports of ice forming on the east side of the lake and slushy/muddy shorelines have been reported. The recent warm weather may have melted the ice that had been forming. **The lake is closed to boating.**

[Cherry Creek State Park](#)

Conditions Report - Northeast Colorado

Antero Reservoir

Reported by Sport Fish Colorado on **12/02/2019**, Antero Reservoir, in South Park Colorado, has fully capped! The lake has been capped since November 27th and the ice thickness is running 2 to 5 inches thick. Use extreme caution as different parts of the lake froze at different times! Using a spud bar to check every step is HIGHLY recommended as well as having a rope, throwable floatation device, ice picks, and fishing with a partner. The Ice Fishing has been good so far with depths of 4 to 12 feet consistently producing activity! Small spoons like the PK Flutter Fish have been working well in low light periods when the fish are aggressive, while smaller ice jigs dead stuck have been producing fish more consistently throughout the entire day. Pinks, whites, oranges, greens, and some natural colors have all been working. Be sure to tip your jig with a mealworm, wax worm, earthworm, or piece of shrimp! On **12/06/2019**, reports are that the ice continues to get better and there is anywhere from 6 to 8 inches of ice on the northern side of the reservoir. It is still critical to use caution as ice thickness varies across the reservoir. Anglers are reporting success on the northern side of the reservoir.

[Antero Reservoir](#)

Bear Creek

Reported **12/06/2019**, reports that the flow continues to drop and most of the creek is frozen at this point in time. If you do find some open water, look for deeper pools and it may be time to start focusing on the tail waters of the creek. Try Blue Wing Olives or Midges where there is open water.

Flows: 21.9 CFS above Evergreen and ice is making the gage readings impossible near South Fork and Morrison. (12/06/2019)

[Bear Creek](#)

Clear Creek

As of **12/06/2019**, use caution when fishing the creek as there are reports of ice forming along banks on certain stretches of this creek and this is because a lot of the stream does not get much sun light. The lower portions of the creek, near Golden, are going to present the best fishing conditions. Guides suggest waiting until the afternoon when things warm up a bit. Look for canyon pull-offs to access the creek. A large portion of the creek is frozen at this point but try Hare's Ears, Copper Johns, midges in the black and brown patterns and even some smaller emergers.

Flows: 53.9 CFS at Golden and 36 CFS near Lawson (12/04/2019)

[Clear Creek](#)

Eleven Mile Reservoir

Report from the Eleven Mile Marina Weekly Fishing Report. As of **12/03/2019**, although the lake is 100% capped the ice thickness is still just 2.5 to 4.5 inches with an occasional 5 inches in some areas. We are not experiencing good ice making weather. It is already almost 40 degrees with expected highs close to 50. Night temps hovering in the teens. This requires you to be even more cautious not less if you go out. Don't assume if you punch a hole and find five inches of ice it's that way everywhere. **The boat ramps have closed for the season.** Anglers who are finding safe ice on the reservoir have had success using jigging spoons tipped with sucker meat or smaller Rapala's jigged with an aggressive motion off the bottom. Tungsten jigs with white plastics have also been working.

[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 **12/03/2019**, there are some mixed reports on ice at the lake but for the most part it sounds like there is over two inches of ice around most of the lake but areas where it is extremely thin, especially near the bridge. There was a report of ice up to 6 inches but it is important to use extreme caution during the early ice season. If you do venture onto the lake, bring a spud bar or chisel to check ice thickness and turn back if it easily punctures through the ice. The wind has also been bad in the area (like usual) and has kicked rocks and dirt onto the ice. Angler have had success catching browns with small jigs tipped with mealworms and Kastmasters. Rainbows have been biting on small jig heads with plastics.

[Georgetown Lake](#)

Jackson Lake State Park

This reservoir is a 2,967 acre water (at full capacity) and anglers can expect quality fishing for walleye, saugeye, wiper, channel catfish, crappie, and trout. From the I-76/Hwy 34 interchange take Hwy 39 7.2 miles north, through the town of Goodrich, to CR Y5. Take CR Y5 2.5 miles west to the reservoir. As of **12/04/2019**, there are reports of skim ice at the lake that is not safe to walk on and recent weather may have melted the little ice present. Shore and ice anglers do well catching rainbow and cutbow trout using night crawlers and PowerBait. Ice fishing shelters must be portable. The minimum size for wipers is 15 inches in length. The minimum size for crappie is 10 inches in length. The minimum size for walleye and saugeye is 15 inches in length. No more than one walleye or saugeye in the aggregate greater than 21 inches in length may be taken per day. **Jackson Lake is closed to all motorized boating!**

[Jackson Lake](#)

Spinney Mountain Reservoir

As of **12/06/2019**, Spinney Mountain State Park has closed for the season and ice fishing is prohibited.

[Spinney Mountain](#)

St. Vrain State Park

As of **12/05/2019**, there are reports of about 2 inches of ice on some bodies of water in the park but nothing that is safe to stand on at this point. 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

Reported by SportFish Colorado on **11/30/2019**, Tarryall reservoir is 85% capped with 6 to 10 inches of ice. There is still some open water by the boat ramp and just east of the boat ramp so use caution! Fishing is good for rainbow trout and cutbow trout in 6 to 20 feet of water with some smaller northern pike showing up as well! The trout have been hitting small tube jigs, rat finkees, Kastmasters, pink spoons, and other small ice jigs. Be sure to tip them with a meal worm, wax worm, or earth worm!

[Tarryall Reservoir](#)

Conditions Report - Southeast Colorado

Arkansas River - Salida to Canon City

As of **12/06/2019**, water temperatures are in the high 30s and low 40s with clear water clarity. Fish will be more active during the warmest parts of the day so pay attention to weather and plan accordingly. Target deep pools and runs for hungry trout when the sun is shining. At this point, midges will make up the majority of a trout's diet but don't be afraid to try stonefly nymphs or caddis larva imitations. The area of the river near Salida will produce the best bite during the winter months.

Flows: 524 CFS at Wellsville (12/04/2019)

[Arkansas River](#)

Arkansas River - Leadville to Buena Vista

As of **12/06/2019**, water temperatures are in the 30s to 40s and there has been clear water conditions. Some ice is forming in the morning so be aware of that if it is a cooler day. Also be aware of slush flows on colder days as well as ice shelves that are forming. The weather is warming up so that should make for better fishing conditions and longer days on the river with hungry trout. At this point, midges will make up the majority of a trout's diet but don't be afraid to try stonefly nymphs or caddis larva imitations. Nymphing in deep runs and pools will be the best strategy, especially when the sun is shining. This time of year, it is important to pay attention to the weather and to try and get out on days when it is sunny to be able to spend more time on the water and avoid slushy flows.

Flows: 70 CFS at Hayden Meadows (12/02/2019) and 290 CFS at Granite (12/04/2019)

[Arkansas River](#)

Pueblo Reservoir

As of **12/02/2019**, anglers are having success catching walleye and boaters have had success trolling jerkbaits and by jigging by slowly retrieving the jig or trolling at a slow pace in 25 to 30 feet of water. Water temperatures have been reported in the low 40s. There are still shad present at the reservoir but they are dying off and should continue to decline. Walleye are biting at night. At night, the walleye are moving to the shallows chasing bait fish so shad imitations are working well. Crappie are also a hot item on the reservoir right now and hitting live baits especially minnows. Look to the slightly deeper water for crappie as they slide onto deeper structure for the winter months. Pro Rogue in the clown colorations are doing very well for both the walleye and the crappie at the moment. The bass fishing has been very slow but some reports of catches are still coming in. Right now is a good opportunity to take advantage of the remaining open water fishing before the bite really slows down for the winter. The minimum size for smallmouth, largemouth, and spotted bass is 15 inches in length. The bag/possession limit and minimum size for walleye/saugeye is five fish in the aggregate, 18 inches in length. The bag/possession limit for crappie is 10 fish and the minimum size is 10 inches in length. The bag/possession limit for wiper is 5 fish and no more than one wiper greater than 21 inches, in length, per day can be taken. **Roadwork has begun on South Marina and North Marina Roads. They will be roto-milling and paving activities on both roads for the next 2 to 3 weeks. Expect delays and gravel roads at the work progresses. The South Decon Station is closed for the next 3 weeks. ALL Decons will be done on the North Ramp.**

[Pueblo Reservoir](#)

Trinidad Lake

As of **12/06/2019**, fishing has been good all around the lake. South shore anglers are catching trout with PowerBait and dough bait fished off the bottom and 12 to 15 inch trout have been reported as common catches. Fish seem to be biting more on green colored baits. In Reilly Canyon, some ice has been forming around the inlet on cold mornings and this may have increased with the recent cold front. The most action for fish is occurring in the early mornings and late evenings. Ice has been forming in some areas but is still extremely thin. **Boating has closed for the season.**

[Trinidad Lake](#)

Conditions Report - Northwest Colorado

Blue River - Silverthorne

As of **12/06/2019**, fishing has been reported as slow lately but there have been ideal flows. Below Silverthorne, the egg patterns have been really popular with the trout. Dredging a midge along the bottom 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. Streamer fishing is still in the game and guides are suggesting Li'l Kims and Tan Peanut Envys to get the bigger fish.

Flows: 100 CFS below Dillion and 204 below Green Mountain Reservoir (12/05/2019)

[Blue River](#)

Colorado River - Near Kremmling

As of **12/06/2019**, take your time in the mornings and enjoy a hearty breakfast and a hot coffee as the fishing will be slow early in the day until temperatures pick up a bit. Ice is starting to affect the well shaded areas of the river so look for runs that receive more sunlight throughout the day. Water temperatures have been reported in the mid 20s and as a result ice should become more and more prevalent on the river. Once you do get out there the fishing has been good with great water clarity. Expect a midge hatch in the mornings and olive hatches in the later afternoons. 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. Streamer fishing is also a great option on this river and use these on windy days!

Flows: 523 CFS (12/05/2019)

[Colorado River](#)

Crystal River

As of **12/04/2019**, clear water clarity has been reported but this can change quickly with the recent cold front and light rain and snow. This river offers ample fishing opportunities and anglers can catch browns and rainbows as well as mountain whitefish! Looks for deep runs, more prevalent on the upper stretches of the river, and use small nymphs to have a chance at catching once of these whitefish. Tungsten ball beads are a great way to fish small flies in deeper water because they are heavier and can sink deeper in the water column at a faster rate than lead. These are also advantageous about you don't need to use a spilt shot which can look unnatural and spook off weary fish. It also reduces twist and tangles in the line caused by spilt shots! Try using San Juan worms, JuJu Baetis', Prince Nymphs, Copper Johns, and Tung Pheasant Tails. There are great fishing spots from Carbondale to Marble but ice is forming above Redstone.

Flows: 91.1 CFS at Carbondale and 58.5 CFS near Redstone (12/05/2019)

[Crystal River](#)

Delaney Buttes

As of 12/06/2019, the ice was damaged at South and North Delaney after the wind storm that went through last weekend. North Delaney has about 25% open water and around 3 inches of ice about 20 feet from the shoreline. There is around 6 inches of ice at the dam. South Delaney is at 50% open water and 3 inches of ice around 30 feet from shore near the north end of the bottleneck. East Delaney is capped with 2.5 to 5 inches of ice and about 2.5 inches of ice around 30 feet from shore before the boat ramp. There is 5 inches of ice straight out from the boat ramp. Deep now 150 yards from the boat ramp is making it difficult to access. For North Delaney, there is a two trout bag and possession limit, artificial flies and lures only, scented flies or lures must be 1.5 inches or longer, Brown Trout 14 to 20 inches long must be returned to the water immediately, rainbow and cutthroat trout 18 to 22 inches long must be returned to the water immediately. In the fall, egg patterns become effective, especially for Rainbows and Browns can be targeted cruising shorelines. During the winter, use small jigs and flies and fish different depths until you find the depth fish are in. A few other road notes:

1. The short cut between Lake John and north end of Delaney's on County Road 5 was drifted shut recently.
2. The back way into Lake John from Cowdrey from 6w to 7 was accessible this afternoon but starting to close in with drifting near the edges.

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](#)" [Delaney Buttes](#)





South Delaney 12.5.19

Photo and Information Credit: Nichole Imm @ Lake John Resort

Dillon Reservoir

As of 12/06/2019, the ice has gotten better and there are reports of ice at 7 inches in some areas but use extreme caution near shorelines as they are getting soft throughout the day. There was around 2 inches of snow on the ice and reports of lots of anglers on the ice. Tungsten jigs with worms have been working well for trout.

[Dillon Reservoir](#)

Frying Pan River - Ruedi

As of 12/06/2019, flows have slowed down which is increasing turbidity on the river due to moss but the river has been fishing well. BWOs have been hatching in the afternoons and focus on fishing in the warmer parts of the day. Brown trout are still spawning so REDDS are apparent and need to be avoided and left alone. Look for the flows to be increased in early January and be prepared with some mysis shrimp patterns closer to the tail water section when this occurs. Some of the current, hot patterns to try out include split case blue winged olives, Cane midge, and Tim's mysis in the #20-22 sizes. Streamers are still an effective technique so consider some slump busters and autumn splendors for a chance at some bigger fish. Use fine tippet!

Flows: CFS 85 (12/04/2019)

[Frying Pan River](#)

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 **12/06/2019**, there have been reports of some ice forming but there is still mostly open water and the ice present is not safe to fish on. The bag and possession limit for lake trout is eight fish. Snagging of kokanee salmon is permitted from September 1st through December 31st.

[Green Mountain Reservoir](#)

Lake Granby

As of **12/06/2019**, reports are coming in that some ice is beginning to form but most of the lake is still ice free and the little ice present is nowhere near safe. Water temperatures were still reported close to 40 degrees around the beginning of the month so things will need to cool off a bit for more ice to form. Water clarity has been good with about 5 to 10 feet of visibility. Fishing has been reported as slow but once it freezes over offers good ice fishing opportunities. Once the lake is frozen, all ice fishing shelters must be portable. **Reminder that Sunset and Stillwater Ramp are closed.**

[Lake Granby](#)

Harvey Gap Reservoir

This reservoir is about 190 surface acres when full. As of **12/04/2019**, there are reports of skim ice at the lake that is not safe to walk on and recent weather may have melted the little ice present. Skim ice is covering about 60% of the reservoir.

The boat ramp is CLOSED for the season.

[Jackson Lake](#)

Lake John

As of **11/30/2019**, Lake John is fully capped with 3 to 4 inches of ice and roads are accessible with some drifting near the edges. The further from shore you get, the thinner the ice will be. Anglers are having a lot of success here! Cowdrey is capped with 6 inches of ice. Big Creek is currently not accessible because of large snow drifts at the entrance. The last update was from November 19th and there was 85% open water with thin layers of ice floating around. This has most likely changed with the recent weather. A few other road notes:

1. The short cut between Lake John and north end of Delaney's on County Road 5 was drifted shut recently.
2. The back way into Lake John from Cowdrey from 6w to 7 was accessible this afternoon but starting to close in with drifting near the edges.

Please remember these conditions and ice are changing by the hour with wind, snow, and sun. Stay tuned for updates!

[Lake John](#)



Lake John 11.30.19 3:00pm



Cowdrey 11.30.19 4:30pm

Photo and Information Credit: Nichole Imm @ Lake John Resort

Roaring Fork River

As of 12/04/2019, fish are still being caught and the water is low and clear. Use stealth when fishing so you don't 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 where the water is moving at a slower pace to target fish.

Flows: 502 in Glenwood Springs (12/05/2019)

[Roaring Fork River](#)

Steamboat Lake

As of 12/06/2019, reports from anglers are that the fishing has been great this year. We've heard that anything red; red PowerBait, Red wigglers, and red lures, have been quite successful all year. **The road into Sage Flats is closed due to soft and muddy conditions. Public access on the road to the dam, from Sage Flats, is closed. Boating is closed for the season.** To check ice conditions, call the park at (970) 879-3922.

[Steamboat Lake](#)

Vega State Park

As of 12/05/2019, all three boat ramps are closed for the season. The lake is starting to freeze around the edges making shore fishing difficult. The Visitor Center is open daily from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

[Vega State Park](#)

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 12/06/2019, there have been reports of some ice forming on the north end of the reservoir but at this point it is not safe to fish. Public access, including fishing, is prohibited within 150 feet of any kokanee spawning trap or wing net from October 1st to December 1st.

[Wolford Mountain Reservoir](#)

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. Reported by Sport Fish Colorado, as of 12/05/2019, the ice at the Gunnison River inlet area is running 3-5" up to about the Lake City Bridge. A newly frozen layer of ice extends west of the Lake City Bridge several hundred yards, but it is still thin. Fishing on the older ice has been fair to good most days, with rainbow trout and brown trout making up most of the action! More reports to come as we the ice extends west and we spend some time fishing on the existing ice! Past reports have indicated that Marabou jigs are also getting really good trout catches from shore especially when there is ample sun and flat water. Not much more time left for open water fishing so take advantage of the conditions while they last. There is open water from the bridge to the dam.

[Blue Mesa](#)



Photo and Information Credit: Robby Richardson @ Sport Fish Colorado

East River

As of **12/03/2019**, there has been extremely cold temperatures at night which has greatly reduced bug activity in the area and the recent cold front has further slowed things down. Fishing has been slow as a result but they can still be caught with a nymph rig. While there is ice present, some deeper pools and open water can still be found but you will need to be cautious when approaching so you don't spook the fish and use light tippet.

Flows: 98.7 (Ice Impacting Reading) CFS at Almont (12/05/2019)

[East River](#)

Gunnison River - Near Gunnison

As of **12/05/2019**, fish have been moving into deeper water with the recent cold weather and flows are at the winter level at this point. Fishing the gunny is similar to many other bodies of water in the southwest part of the state. Nymphing in deeper water is going to be the best way to catch fish. Recent weather may have resulted in more ice formation on the river. Baetis nymphs and midge larva are working well paired with long, small leaders as the water is gin clear and low allowing the trout to sense your presence more easily. You can also try using streamers just be careful not to over fish an area because you may have to cover a long distance to make it to the next fishable hole.

Flows: 294 (Ice Impacting Reading) CFS at Gunnison (12/05/2019)

[Gunnison River](#)

Haviland Lake

Effective 10/29/2019 - 12/31/2019 Emergency Public Fish Salvage

Due to unexpected issues with the outlet structure of the dam at Haviland Lake, the lake is being drained. At Haviland Lake, located 19 miles north of Durango, in La Plata County, all current bag and possession limits for all species are removed. Fish may be taken by lawful angling methods that are currently allowed at the lake and stream. Anglers must have a valid Colorado fishing license. Commercial angling is not allowed. If you have any questions regarding the fish salvage, please call 970-247-0855.

[Haviland Lake](#)

Taylor Park Reservoir

This is a 2000 surface acre reservoir providing good opportunities for catching rainbow, brown, and lake trout as well as northern pike. Taylor Reservoir is located 29 miles northeast of Gunnison. Take Hwy 135 north towards Crested Butte for 9 miles, then right at Almont 20 miles up the Taylor River Road. The reservoir can also be accessed over Cottonwood Pass from Buena Vista by car (summer) or snowmobile (winter). As of **12/06/2019**, there is some skim ice forming on the reservoir but there is not nearly enough for safe fishing conditions. Snagging of kokanee salmon is permitted from September 1st through December 31st. The bag and possession limit for lake trout is three fish, only one of which may be greater than 26 inches in length.

[Taylor Park Reservoir](#)

Taylor River - Below Taylor Park Reservoir

As of **12/03/2019**, reports are coming in that the catch and release section of the river is fishing really well as of late. As one of the best tail waters in the state the fish are weary and it may take a lot of work to get a strike. The best time of day has been between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. when using midges and blue winged olives. Fish have really started to stack up in their winter positions in preparation of the upcoming season. Low flows and good clarity have made lighter rigs and tippet more effective. Brown trout will also be looking for high calorie meals once the spawn wraps up so a few streamers in your arsenal will be a good idea to have on you for the next few weeks.

Flows: 99.8 CFS below Taylor Park Reservoir (12/05/2019)

[Taylor River](#)

Two Buttes Reservoir - Emergency Public Fish Salvage

Two Buttes Reservoir is in imminent danger of a catastrophic fish kill due to extremely low lake levels. Hoping to avoid the loss of a large number of fish, a public fish salvage was authorized today by Brett Ackerman, [@COParksWildlife](#) Southeast Region Manager. For questions or additional information regarding the Emergency Public Fish Salvage, please contact Colorado Parks and Wildlife Southeast Region Wildlife Office by calling (719) 227-5200.

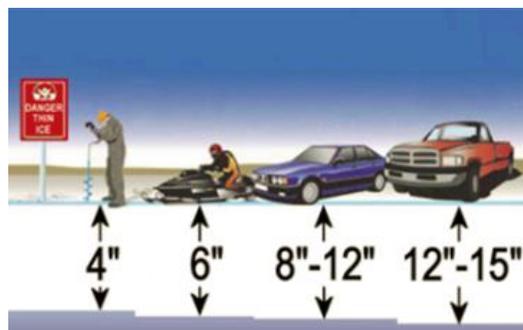
[Two Buttes Reservoir](#)

Conditions Report - Statewide

It is still not time to hang up the waders and fly rods! We are starting to see ice building on most of the smaller creeks and streams throughout the state. The larger rivers are icing up in the shaded sections. Look towards the tail waters below dams as some of the most consistent fishing throughout the winter, constant temperatures and food supply also grow some of the largest fish, so hang on when you hook into one. The rivers and streams are entering winter mode especially in the higher elevations. Low flows, cold temperatures, and clear water mean the fish are stacking in the deeper pools and runs. Nymph and midge rigs will be the go to bugs moving forward but streamers are still going to get you fish for a couple more weeks. We are in the early ice season so use caution if you head out this weekend. Shorelines can often pose a risk as ice may be thicker in the main portions of the water while the shorelines soften up and become dangerous throughout the day. While some higher elevation, mountain lakes have suitable ice conditions at this point, it is still the early season for ice fishing and extreme caution needs to be taken. Be sure to check on the conditions with local shops, anglers, etc. and keep an eye on the weather. If the body of water you want to ice fish on is within a [Colorado State Park](#), check with staff on ice thickness and conditions in the area. Drill test holes to make sure there is adequate thickness and be careful on snow covered ice which can hide unsafe conditions. It is also important to carry a safety kit with you with items such as chisels, picks, nylon rope, wool blankets, cell phones, etc. Perhaps the most important and crucial safety measure when ice fishing at any point of the season is to bring a buddy. Two sets of eyes and ears can observe unsafe ice or assist if the other is in trouble. During early season ice fishing, a lot of our reservoirs will still have a bounty of baitfish and bugs remaining meaning anglers should consider larger lures and jigs. At this point, Tarryall, Antero, Dillion, and Eleven Mile are offering some of the best ice for anglers looking to get on the ice this weekend. Send us pictures of those catches so you can show off your angling fame to your friends and family!

Tip of the Week - Beginner's Guide to Ice Fishing

Safety is the most important consideration for anyone venturing onto the ice during the winter. As a general rule, 4 inches of clear-hard "good" ice is necessary, however, 6 inches of clear-hard ice is better as ice thickness can vary. We recommend that you go with a friend, especially during the early and late ice season. A chisel or spud bar is important during the early and late ice season as it allows you to check ice as you carefully and slowly proceed onto the frozen surface. These are great tools for punching a hole through thin ice, reopening a preexisting hole drilled by another angler and can also be used as a walking stick that makes crossing slick surfaces easier. Ice picks are another good piece of equipment, which can be worn around your neck so they are readily accessible if you do go through the ice. Drive the picks into the sides of the ice or on the surface on the ice and kick your legs to pull yourself out the direction you came from. If you don't have picks you should attempt to pull yourself out by placing your elbows and arms on the ice and using a kicking motion to propel yourself onto the ice. It is important to maintain composure if you fall in and to focus your energy to get out of the water. It is extremely difficult to pull yourself out once falling through because your clothing becomes heavy, the sides of the hole are slick and difficult to grasp, and your body can go into shock as you enter the cold water (cold water shock occurs when you enter water that is 15°F or colder).



Proper Clothing is an essential aspect that all ice anglers must consider to address variable weather in Colorado. Warm boots are important and having boots with some sort of cleat or sole that makes for good traction is ideal. There are many cleat options on the market; one of the most commonly used cleat styles allows you to pull the cleats on over your boots. If your boots are not warm enough and your toes are going numb, try using a layered wool sock system (having a larger boot with more toe room can be helpful for wearing more socks and the extra space allows a warm pocket of air to form). Another alternative or addition to warm wool socks is to use toe warmers. It is important to invest in warm clothing as temperatures can vary greatly in Colorado on an hourly basis so it is always a good idea to wear multiple layers and remove them if it is too warm. Having a pair of sunglasses is important to shield your eyes from the reflected sunlight off the snow surface. Without eye protection, you may sunburn your eyes. This is known as snow blindness and can be very painful and result in temporary loss of vision due to the UV rays. Sunscreen can also be a very important item to keep in your gear bag during all times of the year. Whether it is sunny or not in Colorado, due to the elevation it can be easy to sunburn.

An ice auger is the most important piece of equipment when ice fishing (typically ranging from 6 to 10 inches in diameter). Please note that ice-fishing holes cannot exceed 10 inches in diameter or 10 inches on any side. In addition to the classic hand-auger, there is a wide variety of powered augers that use gas, propane, or rechargeable batteries. These powered augers will save you some effort on the ice but are not needed unless the ice is extremely thick which is more common in high elevation bodies of water. If you don't have an auger you can use a spud bar to make a hole in thin ice or break through a previously drilled hole on the ice. An ice scoop is important to keep your holes open and clear of snow and ice. If you are not using a GPS or a lake map, you may have to drill more holes than you expected to locate a better structure but once you find structure these spots will usually house the biggest fish in the lake/reservoir. Finally, you will need ice-fishing poles (you can use your regular reels) which are shorter than regular poles and have more sensitivity. Ice fishing poles vary in size and strength depending on the fish species you are targeting. If you are, targeting panfish an ultra-light or lightweight ice-fishing pole may be the best option. However, if you are targeting big fish like lake trout, you will need a medium-heavy or heavyweight rod.

A contour map of the lake/reservoir (keep in mind that many maps are outdated and depths are subject to change due to sediment movement and water levels) can be extremely helpful on the ice in locating an appropriate structure. A handheld GPS with topographic lake base-map can be a tremendous help in locating good fishing areas. If you cannot get your hands on either of these, you can always use a string that's knotted every foot with a weight tied to the end to get an idea of the depth you are fishing. These tools are important because, in order to pinpoint where the fish will be congregating, you need to understand the structure of the lake/reservoir bottom. One way to improve your success when ice fishing, is to drill at sticky bottoms. Sticky bottoms refer to shallows and at the edge of drop-offs where the consistency of the bottom is not too hard and not too soft/mucky. You can test this by dropping your line in with some weight and letting it hit the bottom. If you feel moderate resistance when you pull up sharply, you will know you are in the right spot. Sticky bottoms are best during early and late winter because the shallows will have vegetation that provides the fish with cover and the lake shelves will have accumulated sediment that are excellent burrowing spots for insects. Another area to find in the lake structure is to find depressions. Depressions are excellent spots during mid-winter because as it gets to the coldest point in the year, they provide fish with better light levels and warmer water. These depressions are usually 1 to 4 feet in-depth and can be anywhere from the size of a car to the size of an arena. Keep in mind that finding success in these areas can take some persistence.

A vertical presentation using jigs, shad raps, and spoons are great lures for ice fishing (try tungsten jigs which can help you get deeper with smaller jig heads). When ice fishing it is easy to get stuck in a rhythm and use one jigging cadence exclusively. Adjust your jigging cadence and try a variety of techniques to see what fish are responding to that day. Try slowly jigging the lure up and down a couple of times and then just hold it still, this change from slowly moving bait to stationary bait will oftentimes trigger a strike. Pay attention to your jigging cadences and change them frequently and this will lead to more fish on the ice! Don't be afraid to move around on the ice if you're not having success! Finally, there are some tools that make life on the ice more enjoyable (and warmer!) that anglers should consider if they are going to continue partaking in the winter recreational activity. Pulling fish through the ice is more complicated than netting them from a boat or shore and it is important to keep holes clean and clear of ice chunks and other sharp edges that could cut a fish loose. Bring the fish headfirst through the hole by grabbing it behind the head and pulling it up onto the ice. It is important to avoid touching the gills of trout as your fingers could damage them.

Shelters are another great idea and can keep you warm when it is bitter cold outside and the wind is constantly blowing. There are many different styles of shelters available on the market; flip shelters, hub shelters, insulated and non-insulated. In addition to a shelter, portable heaters for your shelter make life on the ice more enjoyable. Last but not least, a sled is another important tool that will help with carrying all the gear!

Gear Checklist:

- Fishing license (required)
- Extra rod stamp (optional)
- Winter clothing (beanie, facemask, gloves, sunglasses, sunscreen, gloves, etc.)
- Warm boots (preferably with cleats or a cleat covers)
- Collapsible chair or 5-gallon bucket (good for carrying your fish out or other smaller tools)
- Spud bar/Ice chisel/Ice picks
- Depth finder/Contour map/Graph/Flasher
- Auger (gas, propane, electric, or hand powered)
- Fishing Equipment (baits, lures, poles, weights, pliers, line, etc.)
- Shelter/Heater
- Sled
- Ice Scoop

Check out this link to an article written by Terry Wickstrom about ["How to get started in ice fishing"](#)!

Have a suggestion or request?

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

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DNR Fish Reporter



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