

Fishing Report

Friday December 29th, 2017



News and Information

CPW is in the process of implementing a new licensing, pass, registration and reservation system.

[All purchasing will be unavailable](#) for a few days beginning January 1, 2018. All customers will need to have an individual email address and password to apply for or purchase CPW products with the new system.

[FAQs](#)

Introduction To Ice Fishing

Saturday, January 6, 2018

Have you ever wanted to try ice fishing but didn't know where to start? Are you new to ice fishing and looking for some tips to help you catch more fish? Then, [this is the class for you!](#) Space is limited so register today. All equipment will be provided or bring your gear and we will help you get it set up. All anglers 16 years old and older must have a valid fishing license. Licenses will not be able to be sold at the event.

The Eagle Claw-Shappell Colorado Classic Pro-AM Grand Slam Ice Fishing Tournament

Saturday, January 6

[The Grand Slam \(All Species\) Presented by Eagle Claw-Shappell](#), this tournament is the first leg or event of the 2018 Colorado Classic Pro-AM Ice Fishing Tournament series, hosted by Eleven Mile Sports. The contest's start and finish will take place at the North Boat Ramp of Eleven Mile State Park. The field consists of up to 150 two-man teams with each team allowed to weigh in fish in each category: TROUT (four fish total weight), PIKE (ten fish total weight), and SALMON (ten fish total weight). Cash prizes awarded for first five places in each category of fish.

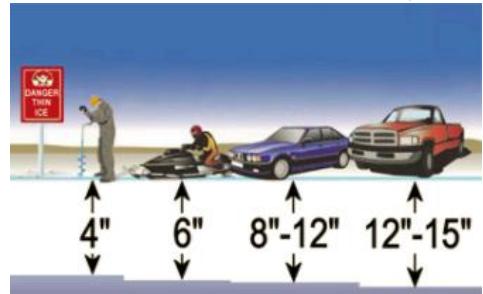
Ice Safety Tips

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 at:

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



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

Body of Water	Region	Report Date
Chatfield Reservoir	Northeast Region	12/19/2017
Anticline Lake	Southeast Region	12/15/2017
Fountain Lake	Southeast Region	12/15/2017
Runyon Lake	Southeast Region	12/15/2017
Boyd Lake	Northeast Region	12/12/2017

Catch of the Week



Justin caught this 23 inch brown trout out of the Pueblo tailwaters.

Have a fish you're proud of? [Share your photo](#)

Conditions Report - Metro Area

Antero Reservoir

This 2200 acre impoundment is located north of US Highway 24 between Antero Junction and the town of Hartsel. There is approximately 9 inches of ice. Anglers reporting success at Antero have been hitting the ice early in the morning. Shallow water has also been productive using pink Ratfinkees, pink Ratsos, Bro's Bloodworms, and Diamond Collar Jigs. Try fishing on the edges of weed lines for the best success.

Aurora Reservoir

CLOSED TO BOATING- This includes all hand launched watercraft such as canoes, kayaks, float tubes, paddle boards etc. Water levels are down about eleven vertical feet, due to construction work on the dam earlier in the year. The reservoir will be filling over the next several months, so ice conditions may not be good this winter. Shore angling for trout off the dam has been slow to fair. Contact the Aurora Reservoir at 303-326-8444 for the latest fishing conditions.

Chatfield State Park

Ice is currently extremely unstable and is advised to stay off not safe due to the current temperatures. Some anglers are already catching perch and rainbows using small Kastmasters and Dropper Spoons tipped with a small Fathead Minnow. The Walleye report is yet to come.

[Chatfield State Park](#)

Cherry Creek State Park

Cherry Creek is an 880 acre reservoir. There is a little ice on the lake at this time. It is extremely unstable, and advised to stay off of it. For more information please call 303-690-1166.

[Cherry Creek State Park](#)

Quincy Reservoir

Closed for the season. Scheduled to re-open March 1st 2018. For more information, call 303-326-8425.

Conditions Report - Northeast Colorado

Boyd Lake

The reservoir closed to boating on December 1. As of 12/26/17 the main marina area had less than 2 inches of ice.

[Boyd Lake](#)

Eleven mile Reservoir

This 3400 acre reservoir is located south of Hwy 24 between Wilkerson Pass and the town of Hartsel. As of this report, the reservoir is 100% ice capped. It has been warm and windy this week. The ice is hard and ranges between 4 to 8 inches. Wind-blown glare ice requires cleats. CPW will soon start its annual winter stocking strategy so there will be ample amounts of 10-11" cuttbows around the north shore boat ramps. In other places anglers are catching numerous 3 to seven pound trout. Fishing for brown trout is slower than for rainbows and cuttbows. Call Eleven mile State Park at 719-748-3401 for updated conditions before traveling to Eleven mile Reservoir.

[Eleven Mile State Park](#)

Evergreen Lake

This 40-acre reservoir is located on State Route 74 in Evergreen. Ice thickness ranges from 3-6 inches. Be aware of the warm temperatures this week. We recommend using a spud bar to test the ice if you decide to venture out.

Georgetown Lake

This 50-acre reservoir is located adjacent to I-70 in the town of Georgetown. Ice thickness ranges from 8-10 inches. Be careful near the road bridge across the middle of the lake, as there are currents under the bridge that lead to variable ice. Fishing for rainbows has been fair using baits such as PowerBait and waxworms on ice jigs.

Jackson Lake

Lake level is still decent; we are roughly 2.4 feet down. Surface water temperature is approximately 32 degrees. We are closed to boating for the season. Fishing had been good for walleye and wiper.

St. Vrain State Parks Ponds

The ice conditions are highly variable on these bodies of water. Fishing for largemouth bass (catch and release) in Blue Heron and Bald Eagle is good. Angling for panfish in all ponds has been fair.

[St. Vrain State Park](#)

Conditions Report - Southeast Colorado

Arkansas River Headwaters

Upper River: The cold nights on the upper river will make fishing the upper Arkansas very difficult this time of year. It has iced up a lot above the Twin Lakes confluence, and can be challenging to effectively fish, if you can even find any active fish in the limited open water. Better conditions will be found further to the south below Buena Vista and near Salida throughout the winter.

Middle River: Fish are definitely holding consistently near deeper water as temperatures cool down, but will not hold in the heavier, faster current at these flows. In fact, fish can still be found in shallow water when food is available as the sun warms the streambed. Midges are becoming more and more important, particularly subsurface in the mornings. At these flows, don't be afraid of tying on smaller patterns. Midges as droppers in the morning behind a stonefly nymph have been productive, and mayfly nymphs sizes #16-18 work well through the afternoons. The key is finding the right water. Spend more time picking apart likely lies out just inside the main current and adjusting dropper depth until you find the sweet spot

Below Salida: Fish are now podded up in or near winter water, so where you find one fish, there are usually more. Current flows make for ideal wade fishing conditions near Salida. Though floating is still possible, current flows require you to boat right on top of lots of the best holding water, whereas wade fisherman can target the prime lies without disturbing fish.

[Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area](#)

DeWeese Reservoir

Located just north of Westcliffe. As of 12/23 ice varied from 4-6 inches. Best ice was on the west end. Some good trout being caught below the village and some smallmouth bass being caught out from the boat ramp. Guys are using a variety of jigs and kastmasters with meal worms and shrimp as bait. For current conditions, contact the CPW Pueblo Area Office (719-561-5300).

[DeWeese Reservoir SWA](#)

Lathrop State Park

Boat Ramps are now closed and will reopen March 2018. Both lakes have some ice, but there is a lot of open water and the ice is expected to melt in the next few weeks with warmer temperatures and high wind in the forecast.

[Lathrop State Park](#)

Lake Pueblo

Surface temperature is slowly plummeting into the low 40s with the nights becoming colder. This has turned the bite somewhat slower, but anglers are still catching some fish. Walleye are being caught in deeper water with jigging raps and other vertical jigging techniques. Bass fishing has slowed down with a few anglers still reporting success using jigs and jerkbaits. The trout fishing has picked up for shore fishermen using bait. No reports on catfish or wiper. Boaters are reminded that winter hours are in effect right now. The hours of operation for the ANS inspection stations is 8 AM to 4 PM. Boaters are now required to complete a pre-inspection to legally launch when inspectors are not present. The instructions on pre-inspection are posted at the entrance of both the south and north boat ramps.

[Lake Pueblo State Park](#)

Monument Reservoir

This 40-acre reservoir is located at the Monument Lake Resort about 30 miles west of Trinidad. The reservoir is ice free with some broken ice at the north end. The entire shoreline is fishable. As of 12/27/17, the main gate has been reopened, but there is no guarantee on day to day access. The parking area is controlled by the City of Trinidad.

San Isabel Lake

This lake is located on Highway 160 west of Rye on the San Isabel National Forest. As of 12/24/2017, there is 4-6" of ice on the lake, but it thins towards the dam and on the north shore. Use caution, but the lake should be fishable for trout, perch, and kokanee. For current conditions, please call the Pueblo Area Office at 719-561-5300.

[San Isabel Lake](#)

Trinidad Lake

The lake is at 980 surface acres with a surface elevation of 6203.74. Fishing from south shore has been decent; the surface temperature remains in the low 40's. Fish that are being caught around the lake have been with worms and PowerBait (rainbow/peach/green color). Reilly canyon where the river comes in is slow and flooded, but trout are being caught on worms. VERY THIN ICE has formed in the inlet and river, 12-16in trout are being checked by Rangers.

[Trinidad Lake State Park](#)

Conditions Report - Northwest Colorado

Highline Lake

Highline Lake will re-open to boating March 1, 2018 if ice and lake conditions allow. No boats are permitted on Highline Lake except for hunters setting up and retrieving waterfowl decoys.

Currently, Mack mesa is iced over except for a small section of open water on the north side of the lake. The ice on Mack Mesa may not be safe. Do Not go onto the ice at Mack Mesa until you know it is safe.

Highline Lake is finally beginning to ice over, with random puddles of water. Hunting blinds 1 through 5 are now iced in. Do not go onto the ice at Highline Lake until you know it is safe.

[Highline Lake State Park](#)

Harvey Gap Reservoir

Perch of all sizes are being caught along with pike and trout. 8,000 catchable trout have been recently stocked.

[Harvey Gap State Park](#)

Rifle Gap Reservoir

Crappie and perch of all sizes are being caught in the middle of the lake, and large trout are being caught on the west end. Keep in mind that there are a couple of fishing regulations that are specific to Rifle Gap.

- Walleye
 - Bag/Possession Limit: 1 fish.
 - Size: Must be 18" or greater
- All other species
 - Same as statewide regulations.

[Rifle Gap State Park](#)

Stagecoach Reservoir

The fishing is heating up with anglers reporting good numbers of fish being caught both in the reservoir and below the dam. Many anglers are having luck and often limiting out on rainbow trout at the Inlet/Lot14/Lot16 area, Keystone Cove, and Morrison Cove. Many anglers are having luck using PowerBait, night crawlers, spoons, jigs, and crank baits.

[Stagecoach Reservoir State Park](#)

Steamboat Lake

Ice is 6 to 8 inches in the coves, fishing has been great. Friday anglers were using crawdad type jigs and did very well.

[Steamboat Lake State Park](#)

Vega

The lake is fully covered by ice. There is approximately 6 inches of ice near the dam. Please be aware that ice depths vary across the lake. The last area to freeze was near Angler's stairwell. Please contact the Visitor Center for questions regarding fishing conditions; we are open daily from 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. We currently have 3 - 4 inches of snow on the ground.

[Vega State Park](#)

Conditions Report - Southwest Colorado

Big Meadows Reservoir

This 114 acre reservoir is a State Wildlife Area southwest of South Fork. From Highway 160, access along Forest Road 410 is currently open, however after the first big snow event the lake is only accessible by snowmobile, skis or snowshoes (2 miles). Because of its access restrictions and remote location, Big Meadows offers a good opportunity for anglers to enjoy a day of fishing away from the crowds while enjoying breathtaking views of nearby peaks in the Weminuche Wilderness. Ice conditions are currently unstable but normally fishing is good and anglers have been successful at the upper end in the shallows. Fishing by the dam is also productive this time of year. For updated fishing reports and ice conditions, contact the Monte Vista office (719-587-6900).

Blue Mesa Reservoir

This 8,900 acre reservoir is located west of Gunnison. Ice is just forming on the inlet area of the reservoir, so additional time will be needed before safe ice present on most of the reservoir. All of the Cebolla and Sapinero basins are still open water. Anglers can check on current ice conditions by contacting Curecanti National Recreation Area at (970-641-2337).

Rito Hondo Lake

Anglers can expect to catch brook trout and occasionally cutthroat and rainbow trout. Ice is beginning to form and anglers should use caution. Fishing conditions are currently unknown. For updated fishing reports and ice conditions, contact the Monte Vista office (719-587-6900).

Road Canyon Reservoir

This 140-acre lake is a [State Wildlife Area](#) located near Creede. The lake is typically easily accessible by vehicle but four-wheel drive vehicles are sometimes needed to access the lake following snowstorms. Anglers can expect to catch rainbow trout and brook trout from 10 to 20 inches. Fishing tends to be better early in the morning.

Ice thickness is currently unknown. Extreme caution should be used around the solar water circulators because the ice is much thinner and not safe near these units. For updated fishing reports and ice conditions, contact the Monte Vista office (719-587-6900).

Conditions Report - Statewide

Rivers and Creeks

Now that we are into the month of January, we notice a shift in fishing conditions. With the arrival of winter, we see low flows and clear waters. This means anglers must be more careful not to spook the fish when approaching the water. Browns have also finished spawning for the season, so be cautious of redds when wading along the rivers. With most of the waters beginning to ice over, anglers will have to primarily rely on tailwaters, which refer to the waters below dams or any other structure that regulates water flow. The regulated water flow keeps the spots from freezing over and provides warmth for the cold-blooded trout. Even with the warmer conditions of these waters, the fish will still behave sluggishly. Fish diets in the winter are made up primarily of midges and an assortment of small blue-winged olive nymphs and are occasionally supplemented by larger mayflies, annelids, trout eggs, stoneflies, and even caddis larva. Winter fishing typically consists of a lot of nymph fishing since the trout are not overly active due to the cold water temperatures, so try using stonefly nymphs and imitation midges. Remember that the hatches are much smaller in the winter, so keep your flies in the #16 to #20 range. It is also important to be mindful of your split shot usage. With the fish being sluggish, they aren't going to divert too much for food, so making sure those flies drift directly in their path is important. Be sure not to use too much split shot though because the last thing you'll want to do is to have to retrieve a snag in those cold waters. As the trout continue to get a later start, anglers should mirror that and look for ideal times to be from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

DNR Fish Reporter

