

# Fishing Report



Thursday December 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021

## News and Information

### Colorado Outdoors Podcast: Episode 22 - Record Year For Kokanee Spawning

[A record year of kokanee salmon spawning on the Dolores River paired with exceptional numbers at Lake Nighthorse](#) in Durango will allow Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) aquatic biologists to fully stock waters in the spring of 2022.

### A late arrival for the ice at Eleven Mile State Park

The ice has finally come on at Eleven Mile State Park. This is the latest the reservoir at the park has capped over - meaning the ice is all the way on, no open water - in the last five years.

[Park Manager Darcy Mount reported the reservoir being capped over on Sunday, Dec. 19.](#)

A combination of higher-than-normal temperatures and battering winds delayed the ice from coming on at Eleven Mile this winter. So far in December, the National Weather Service average temperature for Lake George - the nearby official weather station for the park - is 28.9 degrees (as of Monday, Dec. 20). Normal temperatures for December at Lake George are 18.9 degrees.

### 2021 Colorado Outdoors Photo Issue Video

Each year, the [Photography Issue](#) allows all of us at Colorado Parks and Wildlife and our outdoor enthusiasts to see the beauty of our state through the creative eyes of a group of talented photographers. The images showcased in this annual [photo issue capture the abundant wildlife species and breathtaking terrain that our residents, sportspeople and park visitors enjoy while living life outside in Colorado.](#)

### Ice Fishing 101

Saturday, January 8

[Ever wanted to give ice fishing a try 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!

### Take a Friend Fishing Contest

For the third consecutive year, Colorado Parks and Wildlife and our partner Colorado fishing companies are encouraging anglers to take a friend fishing. As a reward for sharing your expertise and love of fishing, we've created a contest for mentors who take the time to pass on their knowledge.

[NEW THIS YEAR, we are now offering prizes for the mentor as well as the mentee!](#)

	<p>Now you can take the <a href="#">#ColoradoOutdoors</a> anywhere. Follow us on <a href="#">@instagram @coparkswildlife!</a>  <a href="http://instagram.com/coparkswildlife">http://instagram.com/coparkswildlife</a></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 <a href="https://www.facebook.com/CoParksWildlife">https://www.facebook.com/CoParksWildlife</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
Northgate Pond #1	Southeast	12/14/2021
Northgate Pond #2	Southeast	12/14/2021
Northgate Pond #3	Southeast	12/14/2021
<a href="#">Ordway Reservoir</a>	Southeast	12/14/2021
St. Vrain State Park - Sandpiper Pond	Northeast	12/16/2021
<a href="#">St. Vrain State Park - Coot Pond</a>	Northeast	12/16/2021
<a href="#">Fountain Lake</a>	Southeast	12/21/2021
<a href="#">Runyon Lake</a>	Southeast	12/21/2021

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## Catch of the Week



Congratulations to Dawn Jenks for her personal best brown trout. Dawn was fishing a panther martin spinner on the Blue River in Breckenridge. Congratulations on your Catch of the Week, Dawn!

Would you like to be featured in the next CPW Fishing Report's Catch of the Week? 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 or submit through the CPW Fishing App.

# Conditions Report - Metro

## **Aurora Reservoir**

Park Rangers report as of 12/30/2021, "No report. For more information call 303-326-8425. Park Hours for December 7:00 am-5:30 pm. Park will be closed on New Year's Day.

[Aurora Reservoir](#)

## **Chatfield Reservoir**

As of 12/30/2021, for more information, contact park staff by calling 303-791-7275.

[Chatfield Reservoir](#)

## **Cherry Creek Reservoir**

As of 12/30/2021, for more information please call [\(303\) 690-1166](tel:3036901166).

[Cherry Creek State Park](#)

## **Standley Lake**

There is NO ICE FISHING PERMITTED at Standley Lake. Please call ahead prior to heading to the reservoir to get up-to-date lake and shoreline fishing conditions. Contact park staff at 303-425-1097.

[Standley Lake](#)

## **Quincy Reservoir**

Quincy will close for the season. For more information call 303-326-8424.

[Quincy Reservoir](#)

# Conditions Report - Northeast Colorado

## Antero Reservoir

As of 12/21/2021, *Angler's Covey* reports, "Ice is on Antero and should start building."

[Antero Reservoir](#)

## Barr Lake

As of 12/30/2021 park staff reports no new fishing reports at this time. For the most current conditions, please contact park staff by calling 303-659-6005.

[Barr Lake](#)

## Bear Creek Lake

As of 12/30/2021, trout fishing is excellent using a variety of lures.

[Bear Creek Lake](#)

## Boyd Lake

As of 12/30/2021, park staff reports the lake is CLOSED to boating. Fishing for all bass, bluegill, carp, catfish and crappie is fair. Trout fishing is excellent right now using worms, spinners and woolly buggers. There is no fishable ice at this time. There is no fishing permitted from marina slips or docks.

[Boyd Lake](#)

## Cheesman Canyon - South Platte River

As of 12/30/2021, *Angler's Covey* reports, "The flows in the canyon and in Deckers have started to recede. This is expected as the weather will be transitioning into more seasonal averages this week. It will progressively get colder as we head towards the weekend. Fish are feeding all over the river but will start to concentrate in deeper runs as the flows decrease. We expect the flows to go down to around 100 CFS +/- for the remainder of the winter. Take advantage of these great flows before they come down! You can still use some larger patterns on your rigs, but remember as the flows do decrease so does the availability for a lot of big bugs. As usual, Cheesman is super technical and will remain that way through the winter months. The fish are very spooky and are quick to leave feeding lanes. Be willing to move around and switch up techniques, and you should find good success. Small bugs and light tippet is typically the name of the game at this time of year. Fish are keying in hard on midge and mayfly imitations both subsurface and on top of the water. The water temps are a little colder here, so keep that in mind considering hatch times throughout the day."

Flows: 134 CFS (12/29/2021)

[Angler's Covey](#)

Cheesman Canyon

## Deckers - South Platte River

As of 12/30/2021, *Angler's Covey* reports, "It looks like we are entering a period of more seasonal weather and temperatures. With this, downstream water demand decreases and the flows will recede. That's exactly what is happening now. Flows are dropping and will likely continue to do so until we hit the 100 CFS +/- mark. Temps will decrease steadily through the week towards the weekend with increasing chances of snow around the new year. The fish will start to transition into deeper runs as the flows go down. Look for the warmest parts of the day for bug/fish activity. It has slowed down a bit in Deckers, but it's still fishing decent. Mix in some bigger attractor bugs with the standard "small stuff" right now. Leeches, scuds, and worms are all a good bet. This time of year the fish have started to key on smaller bugs. BWO and midge activity has been strong in the morning, with the hatch progressively getting later in the morning. Go small on your bugs and terminal tackle. The dry fly fishing is very good in certain areas. Fish are not rising everywhere, but when you do find them it's a ton of fun. This area is typically busy so expect to fish with a lot of other people."

Flows: 121 CFS (12/29/2021)

[Angler's Covey](#)

[Deckers - South Platte River](#)

### **Eleven Mile Reservoir**

As of 12/30/2021, *11 Mile Marina* reports, "ICE ON! Ice has firmed up with thickness running 6 to 9 inches. A small amount of snow on the ice makes for slick conditions and minor drifting with the winds we have had. **Trout:** GOOD TO VERY GOOD: Initial reports are everyone is having a good time. Action strong throughout the day. Many baits are working. Stop in for the latest report. It is the strong bite you expect from early ice. Stoll to Rocky Flats, Cross Creek to Lazy Boy have seen success. Don't follow the crowd. 12 to 20 feet is a good depth. The ice is too clear to be good fishing when too many people show up in the same spot. Lots of Cuttbows in the 16 to 19 range. Marina North Shore area seeing lots of stockers great for the kids to have lots of action. They haven't seemed to move to the rest of the lake yet. But will eventually.

Kokanee Salmon: No report.

**Northern Pike: No report.**

[11 Mile Marina](#)

[Eleven Mile State Park](#)

### **Horsetooth Reservoir**

As of 12/30/2021, anglers have reported recent wind has kept the reservoir open water. Trout fishing is fair to good.

[Horsetooth Reservoir](#)

### **Lon Hagler Reservoir**

As of 12/30/2021, anglers report trout fishing is good using PowerBait and a variety of lures.

[Lon Hagler](#)

### **North Sterling Reservoir**

As of 12/30/2021, park staff states no recent fishing reports have been submitted. The reservoir does not have fishable ice at this time. The inlet is ON and the Outlet is OFF. The reservoir is closed to boating for the season. Contact the park for the latest conditions at 970-522-3657.

[North Sterling Reservoir](#)

### **St. Vrain State Park**

As of 12/30/2021, park staff reports any ice that was forming was damaged by the recent winds. Plenty of shoreline opportunities to fish the various ponds.

Please contact the park for the most up-to-date conditions by calling 303-678-9402.

[St. Vrain State Park](#)

# Conditions Report - Southeast Colorado

## Arkansas River - Leadville to Buena Vista

As of 12/30/2021, Braden Baker with Ark Anglers writes, "The upper Arkansas is in full winter mode, with fish migrating to their typical winter holding lies. Warmer afternoons can still offer opportunities in the deeper, slower, consistent runs where fish can hold without expending much energy. The upper basin definitely has areas that seem completely empty, as fish have wandered up or downstream to find better water to endure the coming cold. With nighttime temperatures lower here than elsewhere in the valley, expect a small window of opportunity with your prime window being 11:00AM to 2:00PM. The window of opportunity is better further downstream as the water has miles to warm up a few degrees. It will definitely help if you have sun on the water, as the solar energy can make all the difference in the behavior of the fish. Fish are incredibly spooky up here, so be thoughtful and deliberate in your approach. We recommend nymphing or streamer fishing the upper basin. With midges, the predominant food source, a midge larva or pupa in #16-20 is a must-have in your setup. Pair this with a weighted attractor nymph like a golden stonefly in a #10-12 and you'll have an effective "burger and fries" combination for the winter; big fly, small fly.

**Flows: ~70 CFS at Hayden Meadows, 96 CFS at Granite (12/30/2021)**

<http://www.arkanglers.com/>

[Arkansas River](#)

## Arkansas River - Buena Vista to Salida

As of 12/30/2021, Braden Baker with Ark Anglers writes, "You may still see a little ice in the river on the coldest mornings but daytime warmth will quickly clear that and give anglers very comfortable conditions to work with. Expect to find fish podded up in winter holding areas with moderate depth and consistent, slow current where they can hold without expending much energy. Expect strikes to be subtle today, as the cold water will render fish lethargic and unlikely to move far to chase food. As we see this winter behavior becoming the norm, expect to find areas of the river that appear devoid of fish. Often it may seem like all the fish in a 100 yard stretch of water will migrate to one or two deeper runs or pools within that area. When you find this, it pays to slow down and change flies and depth regularly to be successful, resting that run every so often to allow fish to reset before presenting again.

In the winter we generally rely on nymphing as the primary approach to the Arkansas, running flies underneath an indicator, sighter, or even a large dry fly. Midges are the most active food and can be effective as a larva, pupa, or even adult throughout the day depending on conditions. Often we'll fish a midge as a dropper off of a larger attractor nymph, like a large pheasant tail, hare's ear, or copper john. The year-round availability of golden stonefly nymphs make these a good attractor nymph to substitute, as well. These larger flies can be fished in #10-14 and the smaller midges should be in the #16-20 range. We're past the bulk of fall mayfly hatches, but mayfly nymphs like a pheasant tail, two-bit hooker, micro-mayfly, frenchie pheasant tail, etc. are still going to be worth packing in a #16-18 through the late fall and winter."

**Flows: ~220 CFS at Hecla Junction (12/30/2021)**

<http://www.arkanglers.com/>

[Arkansas River](#)

## Arkansas River - Salida to Canon City

As of 12/30/2021, Braden Barker with Ark Anglers writes, "Don't be surprised to see a little ice flow in the river on the colder mornings, clearing mid-morning opening up a window of opportunity for mid-day anglers. Expect to find fish podded up in winter holding areas with moderate depth and consistent, slow current where they can hold without expending much energy. Expect strikes to be subtle today, as the cold water will render fish lethargic and unlikely to move far to chase food. As we see this winter behavior becoming the norm, expect to find areas of the river that appear devoid of fish. Often it may seem like all the fish in a 100 yard stretch of water will migrate to one or two deeper runs or pools within that area. When you find this, it pays to slow down and change flies and depth regularly to be successful, resting that run every so often to allow fish to reset before presenting again.

Through the winter we recommend fishing multiple nymphs under an indicator, sighter, or even under a large, buoyant dry fly. Believe it or not, we do see fish sporadically strike at indicators on the surface during the winter, so why not use a grasshopper to suspend your nymphs? Midges are the most active food and can be effective as a larva, pupa, or even adult throughout the day depending on conditions. Often we'll fish a midge as a dropper off of a larger attractor nymph, like a large pheasant tail, hare's ear, or copper john. The year-round availability of golden stonefly nymphs make these a good attractor nymph to substitute, as well. These larger flies can be fished in #10-14 and the smaller midges should be in the #16-20 range. We're past the bulk of fall mayfly hatches, but mayfly nymphs like a pheasant tail, two-bit hooker, micro-mayfly, frenchie pheasant tail, etc. are still going to be worth packing in a #16-18 through the late fall and winter. Mid-day hours will offer you your best opportunities, especially on the warmest days."

**Flows: 255 at Wellsville (12/30/2021)**

<http://www.arkanglers.com/>

[Arkansas River](#)

**Hugo SWA Ponds**

As of 12/30/2021, anglers report trout fishing is good using a variety of lures.

[Hugo SWA Ponds](#)

**John Martin Reservoir**

As of 12/30/2021, contact park staff for up-to-date conditions by calling (719) 829-1801 or by email:

johnmartin.statepark@state.co.us.

[John Martin Reservoir](#)

**Kissel Pond**

As of 12/30/2021, anglers report fishing for trout and crappie is good.

[Kissel Pond](#)

**Lake Pueblo**

As of 12/30/2021, walleye fishing is fair to good using a variety of lures. Trout fishing is good.

[Lake Pueblo](#)

**Rosemont Reservoir**

As of 12/30/2021, anglers have reported success catching cutthroat trout using Elk Hair Caddis.

[Rosemont Reservoir](#)

**Trinidad Lake**

As of 12/30/2021, park staff reports, "Islands have appeared and some hazards may not be marked. South shore has produced good size trout often using PowerBait, doughballs and nightcrawlers. Reilly Canyon is still shallow but some trout are being caught. Ice forms in the coves but usually disappears by afternoon. Boating is CLOSED for the season. Call the park for the most up-to-date conditions at 719-846-6951.

[Trinidad Lake](#)

**Willow Springs Pond**

As of 12/30/2021, trout fishing is good and more reports of 8 - 12 inch fish are being caught.

[Willow Springs Pond](#)

# Conditions Report - Northwest Colorado

## Blue River

As of 12/29/2021, *Cutthroat Anglers* report, “Flows came down to 150 CFS and are likely to stay very low throughout the winter with how low Green Mountain Reservoir is. This is a low flow for wading and we have been seeing crowds here. Fish are finishing up their spawn so streamer fishing can get really good this time of year as they try and put on calories to recover. In the deeper pieces of water, imitations of golden stonefly nymphs, worms, and leeches could work well as attractor flies. However, smaller Baetis and midge imitations will be productive as your second or third fly. Also, keep an eye out for risers, dry fly fishing can be good here when it’s on and we have been seeing some baetis mid-day.”

Flows: 219 CFS below Green Mountain Reservoir (12/29/2021)

[Cutthroat Anglers](#)

[Blue River](#)

## Colorado River - Pumphouse Area

As of 12/29/2021, *Cutthroat Anglers* report, “Flows have come down to 490 CFS. This stretch will likely have ice starting now. Fishing has been awesome in this stretch while it’s stayed open. The fish are podded up in deep water right now trying to conserve energy with the cold water. Baetis and midges have been the main food source here! Once you catch a fish, stay put and never leave fish to find fish. Eggs have also been very productive. Please watch out for spawning fish in the area.”

Flows: 435CFS (12/30/2021)

[Cutthroat Anglers](#)

[Colorado River](#)

## Eagle River

As of 12/29/2021, *Cutthroat Anglers* report, “The Eagle is fishing well but it is starting to freeze up especially over the last few days. The river should mostly freeze up over the next two weeks. With low flows be sure to use a lightweight nymph rig. The fish will push closer and closer to the tailouts as winter progresses. Baetis and midges have all been showing themselves. This is definitely a good option for fishing right now! Streamer fishing can also be awesome on this river in December with a low and slow retrieve. We recommend small kreelex minnows and sparkle minnows. Eggs, worms and small stones are all excellent flies to lead with!”

Flows: N/A Wolcott to Dotsero (12/29/2021)

[Cutthroat Anglers](#)

[Eagle River](#)

## Grand Lake

As of 12/30/2021, lake trout fishing is fair to good and anglers are reporting success using white tube jigs tipped with sucker meat.

[Grand Lake](#)

## Harvey Gap

As of 12/30/2021, park staff reports, “**Always use caution when fishing on the ice** and be sure to fish with a buddy. Ice thicknesses vary across the reservoir as a whole and can vary significantly even a few yards away. Ice rescue stations are located at popular areas around the lake, but nothing can provide for your safety like taking proper precautions and planning and preparing for the unexpected. Recommended items to bring along are ice awls, a life jacket, rope and a fishing buddy.”

[Harvey Gap](#)

## Lake Granby

As of 12/30/2021, fishing early morning has provided a hot bite for lake trout. Anglers are having success catching trout from shore as well using a variety of lures and baits.

[Lake Granby](#)

## Lake John

As of 12/30/2021, trout fishing is excellent using a variety of lures.

[Lake John](#)

## Mack Mesa Lake

As of 12/30/2021, anglers have reported trout fishing is fair.

[Mack Mesa Lake](#)

**Rifle Gap**

As of 12/12/2021, park staff reports, “trout fishing is good with few reports of walleye being caught. The lake iced over December 10.”

[Rifle Gap](#)

**Vega Reservoir**

As of 12/30/2021, park staff reports, “Currently we have about a foot of snow on the ground and 3 - 4 inches of ice on the lake. Please use extreme caution if you access the lake as ice depths vary across the reservoir.”

[Vega Reservoir](#)

**Williams Fork Reservoir**

As of 12/30/2021, anglers report pike fishing is fair to good. Trout fishing is good.

[Williams Fork Reservoir](#)

**Yampa River**

As of 12/30/2021, park staff reports, “No Fishing Report last week The Yampa River is very low.” Call the park for the most up-to-date conditions.

[Yampa River](#)

# Conditions Report - Southwest Colorado

## Animas River at Durango

As of 12/30/2021, *Duranglers* report, "Cooling temps have fish slowing down and moving into deeper water, but may get up and move about with high sun and warmth midday. It's a midge hatch game midday, so have smaller #18-22 bugs: dries, emergers, and nymphs. Slowly fish streamers too."

Flows: 165 CFS at Durango (12/29/2021)

[Duranglers](#)

[Animas River](#)

## Blue Mesa Reservoir

As of 12/30/2021, anglers report ice continues to build at Dry Creek with 4 inches. Please use caution.

[Blue Mesa Reservoir](#)

## Dolores River

As of 12/30/2021 *Duranglers* reports, "The upper Dolores drainage is slowing down. You will have to fish nymph rigs for the most part, but streamers may find fish. Midday may have hatches of midges"

Flows: ICE at Dolores (12/30/2021)

[Duranglers](#)

[Dolores River](#)

## Gunnison River

As of 12/30/2021 *Duranglers* reports, "Recommended Nymphs/Patterns: Two-Bit Hooker 16-18, Frenchie 14-16, Napoleon Jig 14-16, Pat's Rubber Leg 8-12, Prince nymphs 10-14, Graphic Caddis, McPhail Caddis Pupa, Deep 6 Caddis Pupa."

Flows: 421 CFS below Gunnison Tunnel (12/29/2021)

[Duranglers](#)

[Gunnison River](#)

## James M. Robb Colorado River

As of 12/30/2021, park staff reports trout fishing is slow to fair. Trout typically bite on a variety of bait and lures. Please ensure the responsible and ethical release of fish and properly dispose of fishing line. Remember, the daily limit for trout is four fish per person."

[James M. Robb Colorado River - Corn, Fruita, and Connected Lakes](#)

## San Miguel River

As of 12/30/2021, *Duranglers* reports, "Lower flow, smaller bugs. Fish will be in deeper pools."

Flows: ICE near Placerville (12/29/2021)

[Duranglers](#)

[San Miguel River](#)

## San Juan River at Pagosa Springs

As of 12/30/2021 *Duranglers* report, "For dries try Olive Splitsville Emerger 18-20, BWO Para Extended Body Dun 18-20, Parachute Adams 18-22."

Flows: 54.8 CFS at Pagosa Springs (12/29/2021)

[Duranglers](#)

[San Juan River](#)

## Uncompahgre River

As of 12/30/2021, *Duranglers* recommends using, "Midges 18-24: Sidewinder Midge Pupa, Tav's Big Mac, Jujubee Midge. Midge Dries: Duranglers Adult Midge, CDC Biot Midge, Midge Dry. San Juan Worms, Red, Wine, Orange. Red and Orange Annelids, and Chamois leeches. Thread Baetis, Jujubaetis, Split Back PMD."

Flows: 44.1 CFS below Ridgway Reservoir (12/29/2021)

[Duranglers](#)

[Uncompahgre River](#)

# Tip of the Week - Know Before You Go

[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 going out.

**Before going onto a frozen lake, pond or river,** it’s important to take safety precautions to reduce the risk of falling through the ice. Remember you take a risk any time you go onto the ice. Anglers should always decide for themselves if it is safe to go out and walk on or drive a snowmobile on ice.

**Knowing how to judge ice conditions** will help you make more informed decisions while enjoying your outing. Ice thickness depends on several factors with the first and most obvious factor being location. The type of lake also affects ice thickness; a shallow lake will freeze faster than a deep lake. Look for clear blue ice. New ice is stronger than old ice. Ice thickness is not consistent. Beware of ice around partially submerged objects such as trees, brush, embankments or structures. Ice will not form as quickly where water is shallow or where objects may absorb sunlight.

**When ice fishing, it is always a good idea to drill test holes** or use an ice chisel as you venture onto a lake to help judge the thickness and character of the ice. These “Test” holes should be at no more than 30-foot intervals.

**You should also have a safety kit** specific to ice fishing whenever you go. The items on this list will help prevent someone or something from falling through the ice. If you or someone else should fall through the ice, know how to use these tools to perform a [self-rescue](#) or [assist in a rescue](#). The safety kit list is at the beginning of each rescue guide.

We love to hear back from our subscribers regarding fishing reports, tips, and requests for the 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](mailto:dnr_fish.reporter@state.co.us).

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DNR Fish Reporter



**COLORADO**  
Parks and Wildlife  
Department of Natural Resources