

John Martin Reservoir

State Park Management Overview



COLORADO

Parks and Wildlife

Department of Natural Resources

Land Owner: US Army Corps of Engineers

Land Lessee: Colorado Parks and Wildlife

Lease Propose: Management of State Park and Recreation on the property consisting of 1,700 land acres and up to 11,500 surface water acres (currently 2050 acres).

History: State Park established 2001. “Caddoa Dam Project” began in 1939 and was led by the USACE, after a short intermission for World War II, the dam was completed in 1948. The Dam was built primarily for flood control and irrigation storage.



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Managing for world class outdoor recreation opportunity.

Our pursuit is to manage facilities and outdoor recreation amenities within the park to provide positive experiences for Coloradans and visitors.

John Martin Reservoir State Park provides a window into the past with unmatched starry night views.

Attractions include:

- Dinosaur Tracks
- Petroglyphs
- Santa Fe Trail Site
- Historical and cultural treasures within short distance of the park

We team with the Area 12 Office to provide community events and watchable wildlife festivals to better serve local communities.

Events Include:

- High Plains Snow Goose Festival
- Bent on Birding
- Boat Safety Classes
- Lake to Table fishing clinic
- Egg Stravaganza Hunt
- Multiple Parades
- Community Events



Connect people to Colorado's outdoors

Our staff continually develops new avenues to provide recreational activities for our visitors.

Recreational boating is by far the most popular attraction on the main reservoir, with some additional paddle sport opportunity on Lake Hasty. The State Park provides spectacular fishing, camping, hiking, and leisure activities (geo cache, horse shoes, wildlife viewing, disc golf, paddle sport rental, etc.)

During high water years this reservoir can quickly become the largest surface area reservoir in the state. With three boat ramps active when our storage is over 160,000 storage acre feet, we get a little busy. Things slow when the water year is lighter. Sometimes we get both in the same year.

We serve a diverse population including all of Colorado, as well as Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, and Nebraska. We are often the first stop in Colorado for many international travelers.



Recent and future work

From fall 2023 to spring 2024 the USACE conducted a dredging operation on the main reservoir. Removing sediment buildup from the upstream portion of the dam.

Repairs in the family restroom of the main shower building

Wastewater Plant relining project

Ceiling staining and wall painting in the main shower building

Roof, wall, and erosion damage repairs from storms will begin soon.

Floor resurfacing in the main shower building

Visitor Center Flooring Repair

Pilot project for the Point Campground- Install Shade Structures

Phase II of road repairs

Culvert Replacement on the north end of the park

Trail Installation around Lake Hasty

Finalized and took possession of the completed temporary housing unit.

West Shelter Replacement/ Day Use Area Development



Path forward and future expansion

We strive to connect people to Colorado's outdoors...

Our State Park provides exceptional facilities and access to support opportunities for excellent outdoor recreation experiences.

Working with our Federal Partner has its challenges when trying to accomplish any changes it takes time and continued effort to ensure clearances are gained in order to complete projects.

We continue to work diligently toward improvements in effort to keep up with the changing needs of visitors. We must balance those new needs and ideas with our need to maintain existing infrastructure.

Nearing our turn on the Park Master Planning List will require public involvement. This process will help shed light on what future projects the state park will implement for years to come.



Challenges we face

Good communications between the State Park and USACE has benefited our relationship. Although staffing turnover has strained efforts in the past, we are currently working well and intend to continue that trend.

Interagency Coordination with new projects has become a challenge because the requisition processes have dramatically changed. In practice, so far we have found common ground and ways to work towards resolution.

We continue to have variable water which makes the lake difficult to predict and therefore, manage. While SE Region CPW Staff have put considerable effort into securing water for the permanent pool to protect the fishery and maintain the boating access, the intricacies of water rights do not make that task easy.



Species Conservation

CPW has an important role in the conservation of the Interior Least Tern, and Threatened Piping Plover.

We also establish a waterfowl resting area and close portions of the campground to host roosting eagles in the winter.

