



# South Platte River At Cheesman Canyon

Last Updated March 2022

## FISH SURVEY AND MANAGEMENT INFORMATION

Tyler Swarr - Aquatic Biologist (Upper South Platte Basin)

tyler.swarr@state.co.us / 303-291-7159

**General Information:** Cheesman Canyon provides quality fishing for Rainbow Trout, cutbows, and Brown Trout. Famous for its size of trout, scenic canyon, and proximity to Denver and Colorado Springs.

**Location:** Jefferson and Douglas County line. Five miles southwest of Deckers, CO.

**Size:** Approximately 3 miles in length

**Recreational Management:** United States Forest Service and Colorado Parks and Wildlife

**Fishery Management:** Coldwater angling for trout species

**USFS South Platte Ranger District Website:** <https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/psicc/about-forest/?cid=fseprd915453>

**Purchase a Fishing License:** <https://www.cpwshop.com/purchaseprivilege.page>

### Amenities and General Info.

- Parking lots/access points (2)
- Hiking trail: Hiking is the only way to access Cheesman Canyon. You can access the Gill trail from the USFS parking lot 4 miles southwest of Deckers off of CTY HWY 126, or from Cheesman Reservoir Road 211. Both ways into Cheesman Canyon require climbing and descending steep terrain.
- Outhouses at parking lots
- Informational kiosks

### Regulations

- From Cheesman Reservoir Dam downstream to the upper Wigwam Club property line:

Fishing by artificial flies and lures only. All trout must be returned to the water immediately upon catch.

### Previous Stocking

- None in recent history. Both Brown Trout and Rainbow Trout naturally reproduce in this section of the South Platte River.

### Sportfishing Notes

The upper section of Cheesman Canyon was not affected by sediment from the Hayman or Schoonover fires. Three quarters of a mile downstream of Cheesman Dam is Schoonover Gulch. During heavy summer rain events, this gulch can add a significant amount of sediment to the South Platte River from the fires, making fishing and wading difficult.

#### Summer

- Fishing is best during periods of stable water releases out of Cheesman Reservoir. With water releases coming from the middle and bottom of the water column, trout remain active during hot summer months.

#### Winter

- This tailwater fishery remains ice free most of the winter, although the Gill trail can be icy in areas. Target fish in deep runs or pools during this time of year.



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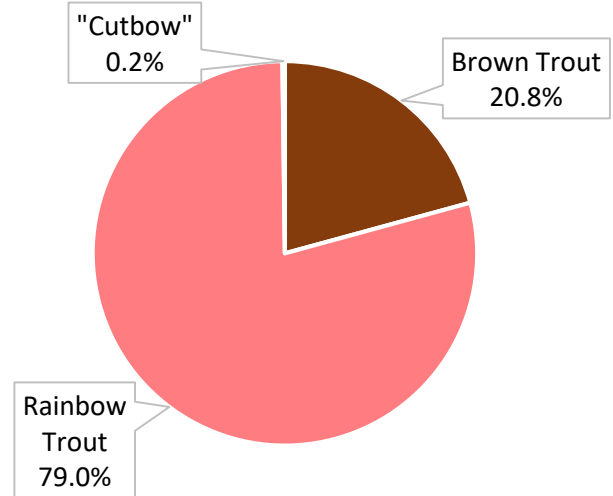
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### Upper Cheesman Canyon Survey Information



2021 Annual Survey Species Composition



Upper Cheesman Canyon Electrofishing Data For All Trout

Year	#/Mile	Biomass (lbs per acre)	Density (# per acre)	# > 14"
2004	3915	891	587	155
2005	3260	786	487	138
2006	3053	585	456	110
2008	3831	586	572	96
2009	3874	600	579	102
2010	4646	710	694	133
2012	5161	823	771	156
2013	5425	1007	810	202
2015	2684	479	401	81
2016	4555	859	681	152
2018	4985	904	748	159
2019	3132	749	749	90
2021	3594	789	603	158



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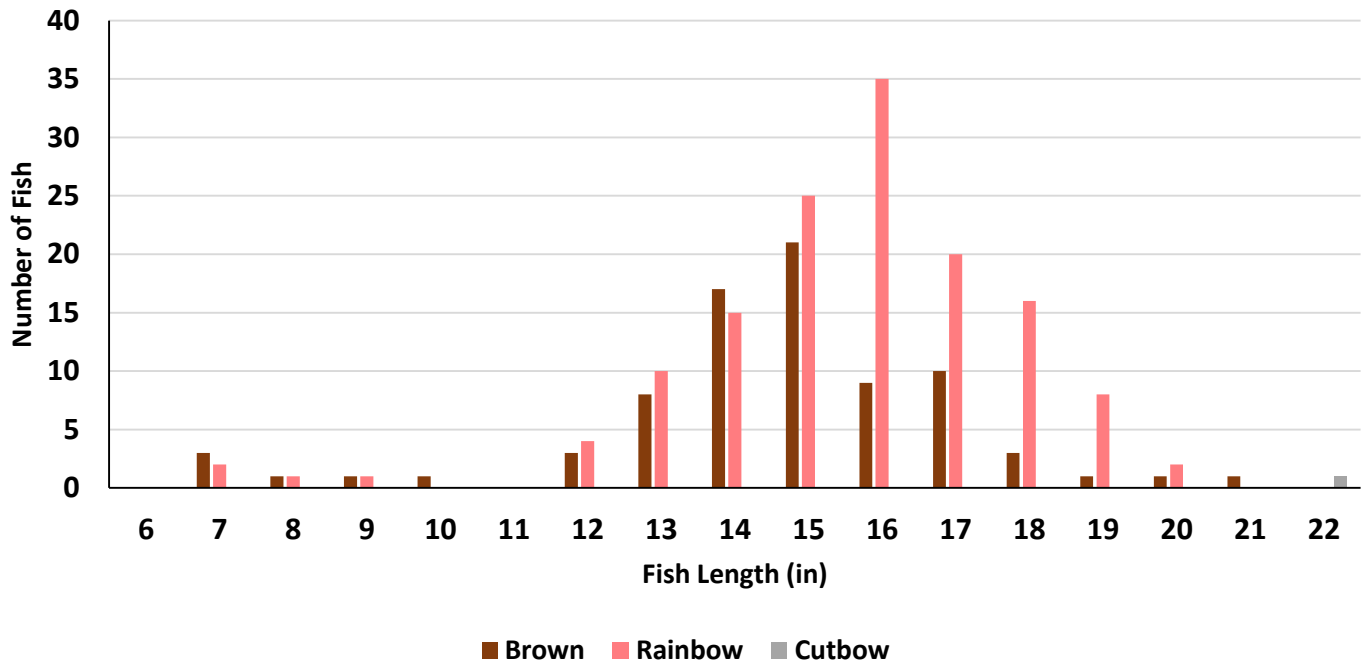
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### Upper Cheesman Canyon Survey Information

2021 Annual Survey Length Frequency Histogram



The length frequency histogram for the number of trout captured during the 2021 annual electrofishing survey. The number of fish captured is shown for fish greater than 6 inches in length. Each bar represents the number of fish captured in one inch increments.





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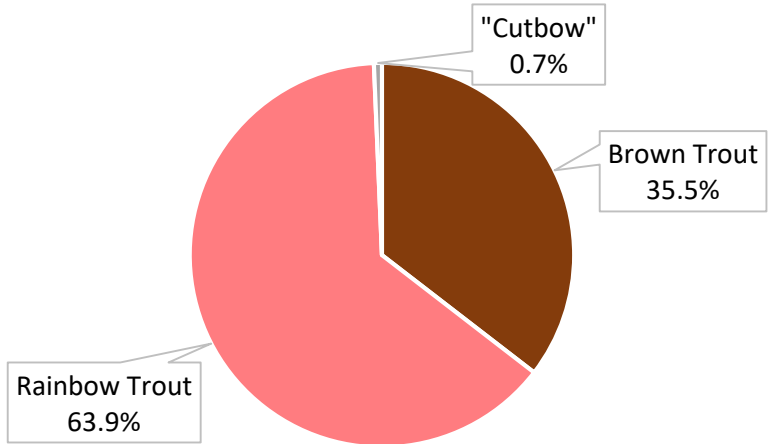
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### Lower Cheesman Canyon Survey Information



**2021 Annual Survey Species Composition**



**Lower Cheesman Canyon Electrofishing Data For All Trout**

Year	#/Mile	Biomass (lbs per acre)	Density (# per acre)	# > 14"
1994	3413	339	381	178
1996	2968	314	334	161
1997	3624	366	404	209
1998	5240	678	584	170
1999	6871	797	766	240
2000	4431	504	494	206
2001	3705	417	413	162
2002	4357	463	486	177
2003	3541	537	501	183
2004	3758	551	477	201
2005	4530	574	579	190
2006	3873	406	494	124
2008	4040	358	516	83
2009	3732	389	477	81
2010	3644	373	466	111
2012	4028	414	515	129
2013	3978	580	508	196
2015	4744	491	606	142
2016	5102	743	652	248
2018	5533	828	706	274
2019	4364	695	915	239
2021	3893	504	508	191



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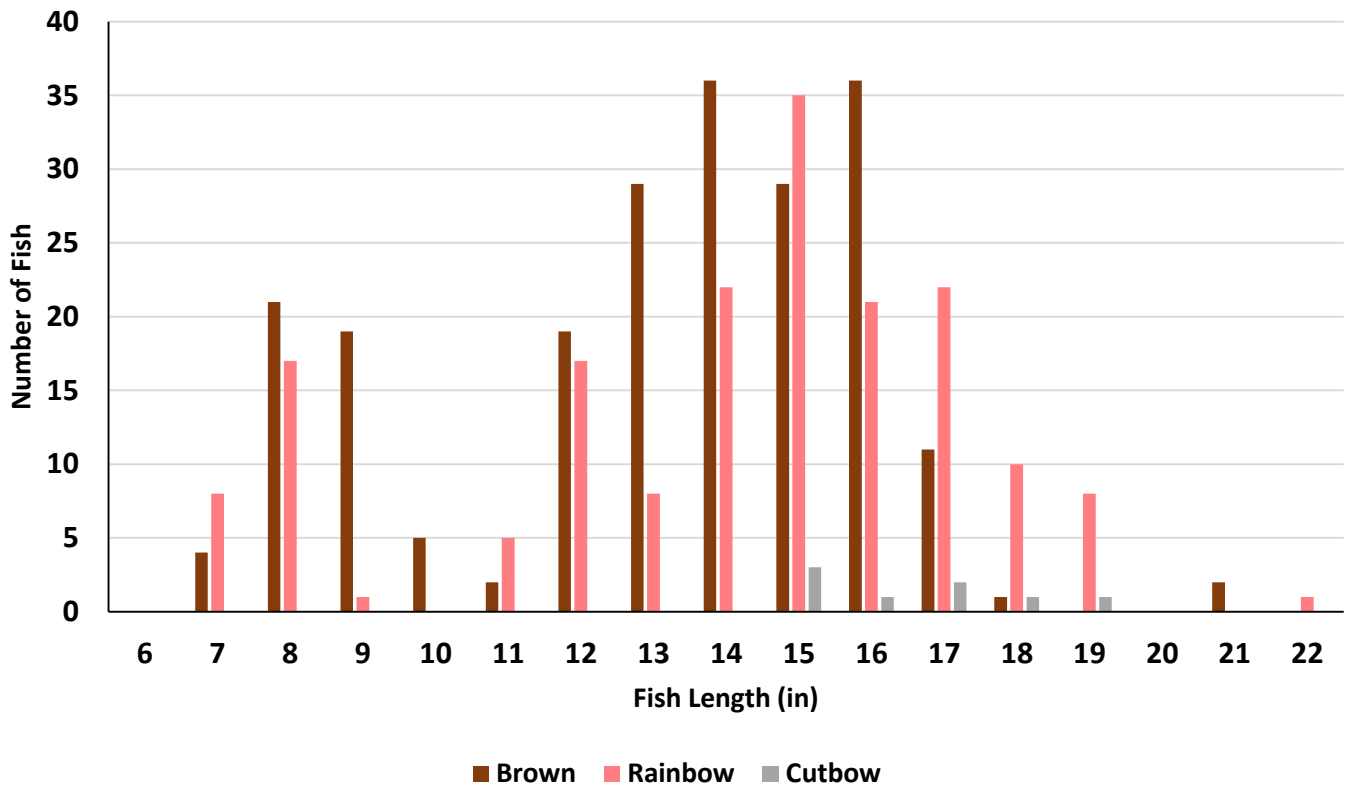
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### Lower Cheesman Canyon Survey Information

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Length frequency histogram for the number of trout captured during the 2021 annual electrofishing survey. The number of fish captured is shown for fish greater than 6 inches in length. Each bar represents the number of fish captured in one inch increments.

