



# Chambers Lake

## FISH SURVEY AND MANAGEMENT DATA

Kurt Davies - Aquatic Biologist (Fort Collins)

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**General Information:** Chambers Lake (255 acres) is a coldwater reservoir on USFS property with a campground and boat ramp available. Fishing for rainbow trout, lake trout, and kokanee is available.

**Location:** Larimer County. From Fort Collins, go N 6.1 mi. on US Hwy 287 to CO Hwy 14. Turn left and proceed 51 mi. up Poudre canyon to lake.

**Recreational Management:** US Forest Service

**Fishery Management:** Coldwater angling

**Purchase a Fishing License:** <http://cpw.state.co.us/buyapply/Pages/Fishing.aspx>

| <u>Amenities</u>  | <u>Previous Stocking</u>  | <u>Sportfishing Notes</u>  |
|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Boat Ramp</li> <li>• Campground</li> <li>• Water</li> <li>• Restrooms</li> </ul>   | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>2013</u><br/>Cutthroat/Rainbow Hybrid<br/>Cutthroat Trout<br/>Rainbow Trout</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>2012</u><br/>Rainbow Trout<br/>Kokanee Salmon</p>   | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Lake Trout</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jig near steep dropoffs</li> <li>• Target cruising fish early and late in the day</li> <li>• Steep slopes make for good shore fishing on the east side of the lake</li> </ul>  |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Regulations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wakeless speed boating only</li> <li>• Day use fee at campground for vehicles</li> <li>• Ice Fishing Allowed</li> <li>• No Snagging for Kokanee</li> </ul> | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>2011</u><br/>Rainbow Trout<br/>Kokanee Salmon</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>2010</u><br/>Rainbow Trout<br/>Kokanee Salmon</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>2009</u><br/>Rainbow Trout<br/>Kokanee Salmon</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>2008</u><br/>Rainbow Trout<br/>Kokanee Salmon</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Rainbow Trout</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The inlet bay is particularly good for catching trout</li> <li>• Typical bait presentations and medium sized spoons and spinners are usually effective</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Kokanee Salmon</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try small jigs through the ice</li> <li>• Trolling from a boat is the most effective summertime method</li> </ul> |



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### Management Notes



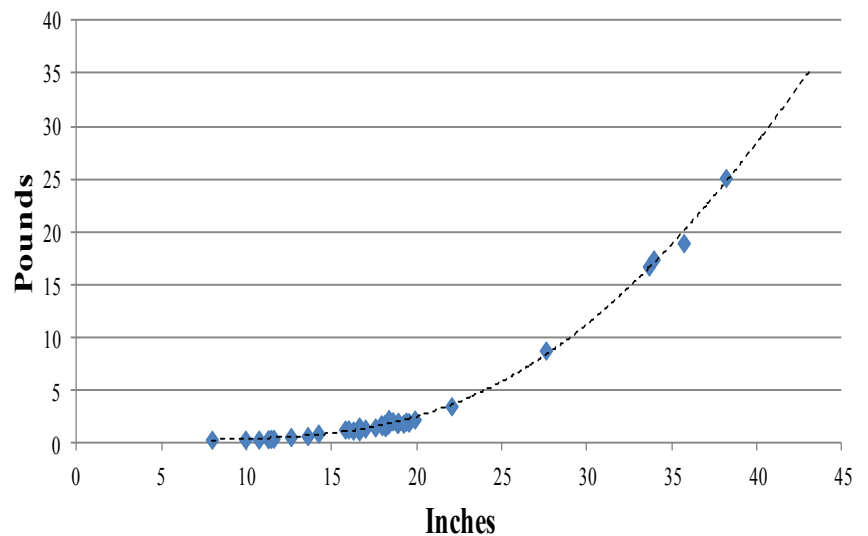
Chambers lake is a high elevation water storage reservoir with a large fluctuating water level. Water is typically stored through the winter and spring and released through the summer and fall. Chambers is managed as a mackinaw (lake trout) and kokanee salmon fishery. CPW also stocks catchable-sized rainbow trout to provide better recreation for shore anglers.

Fishing opportunities exist year-round and Chambers is a popular place to ice fish for those who don't mind a bit of a hike. Take care when out on the ice. Because of winter storage and snowpack, a wet, slush layer will often form above the ice later in the season.

Chambers is also one of the last spots in Colorado where the glacial relic lake chubs can still be found.

Chambers Lake's high altitude, low nutrients, cold water and short growing season grows lake trout about 2 inches/year. Fortunately lake trout are capable of living a long time with a slow metabolism. The graph on the left shows how mackinaw length and weight in Chambers relate. As a fish gets longer, it starts to put on more weight/inch. The blue dots represent all the mackinaw that were actually caught and measured in the 2013 gill net survey.

**Chambers Lake Mackinaw (Lake Trout)  
Length/Weight 2013**





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#### Lake Trout:

Mackinaw in Chambers have some limited reproduction that is probably not sufficient to address angling needs. CPW has planted mackinaw periodically to supplement the population but they have been unavailable for several years. The last plant for Chambers was in 2006 when 11,500 five-inch fish were stocked. This age class has done well and you can see it tracking across the length/frequency graph below. Look at the strong 10-12” size class in 2009 that shows up again as 16-18” in 2012 and is a strong presence as 18-20” fish in our 2013 survey. Also note the presence of likely natural reproduction with some smaller fish showing up since the 2006 plant.

### Lake Trout Length/Frequency Chambers Lake 2009-2013

