



# Chambers Lake

Updated June 2022

## FISH SURVEY AND MANAGEMENT DATA

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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 and lake trout is available.

**Location:** Larimer County. From Fort Collins, go North 6.1 mi. on US Hwy 287 to CO Highway 14. Turn left and proceed 51 miles up the Poudre canyon to Chambers 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>2021</u> Rainbow Trout</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>2020</u> Rainbow Trout Kokanee Salmon</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>2019</u> Rainbow Trout 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>2018</u> Rainbow Trout Kokanee Salmon</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>2017</u> Rainbow Trout</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>2016</u> Rainbow Trout</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>2015</u> Rainbow Trout Kokanee Salmon</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>2014</u> Rainbow Trout 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> <li>• Recruitment and success of kokanee has been low the past several years</li> </ul>



# Chambers Lake

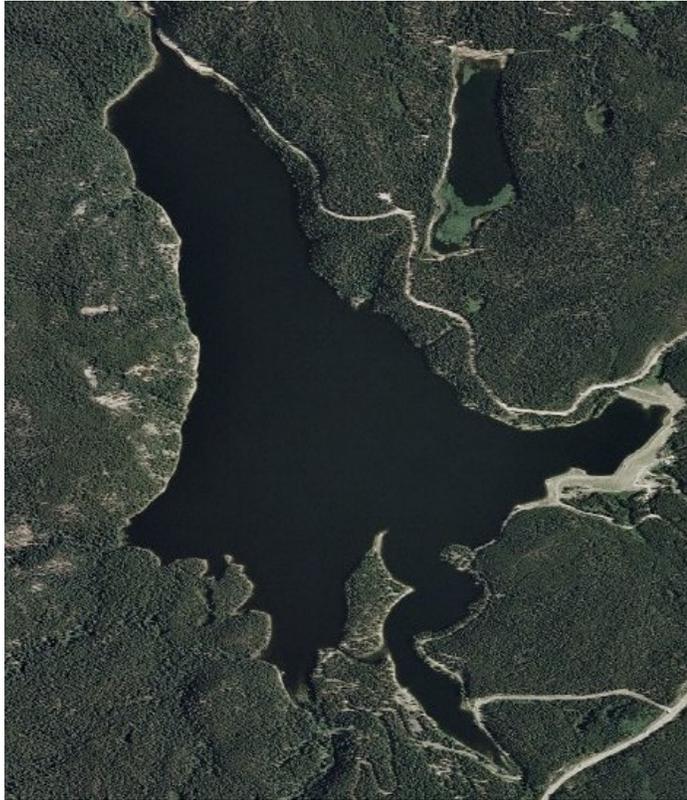
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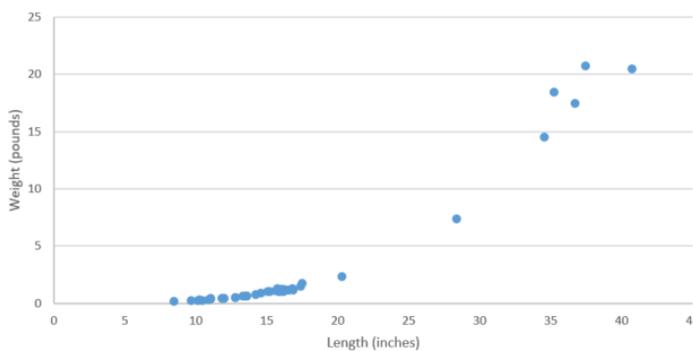
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### Management Notes



Chambers: 2021 Lake Trout-Length/Weight



Chambers Lake is a high elevation water storage reservoir with a large fluctuating water level. Water is typically stored through the winter and spring then 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. Use caution 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 glacial relic lake chubs can still be found. They persist in the reservoir through natural reproduction and grow to around five inches in length.

Chambers' high altitude, low nutrients, cold water, and short growing season results in slow growth rates, about 2 inches/year for lake trout. Fortunately, lake trout are capable of living a long time with a slow metabolism. The graph in the bottom right shows the relationship between lake trout length and weight. As a fish gets longer, it starts to put on more weight/inch. The blue dots in the figure to the left represent individual lake trout that were caught and measured during the 2021 gill net survey. The fish in the bottom left was a 40.7 inch and 20.5 pound Lake trout caught in a gill net and released alive.

The 2020 Cameron Peak Wildfire, the largest in state history started near Chambers and burned extremely hot and fast near the lake. Despite the intensive burn, negative impacts to the lake had not been observed prior to sampling in July 2021.



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#### Lake trout:

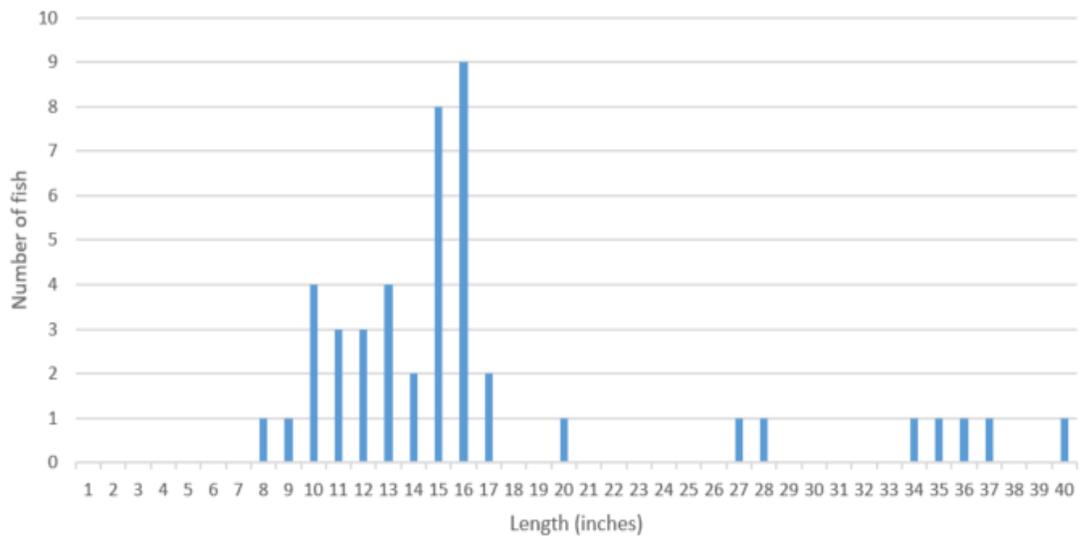
Lake trout in Chambers are maintained through natural reproduction with. Despite no supplemental stocking in recent years there were several year classes represented during 2021 sampling. The figure below shows several cohorts of naturally reproduced lake trout coming up in Chambers Lake. However, there are not many fish between 18-34 inches which could likely be due to angler harvest of these size classes. CPW will continue to monitor the age structure and evaluate potential protective regulations to ensure mature lake trout are still present to naturally reproduce and perpetuate the fishery.

#### Kokanee Salmon:

Kokanee have also been in relatively limited supply within CPW hatcheries for several years. However,

Chambers was stocked with kokanee in 2014, 2015, 2018, 2019, and 2020. No Kokanee were caught during sampling in 2021, suggesting very limited success from those stocking events. CPW will continue to evaluate kokanee management, but at this time it is likely that we will discontinue kokanee stocking in the future as these fish are likely just feeding lake trout and providing little direct angling opportunity.

Chambers: 2021 Lake Trout



Three lake trout all greater than 35 inches caught in one gill net and all released alive



Lake Chub