



Pueblo Reservoir

FISH SURVEY AND MANAGEMENT DATA

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General Information: Pueblo Reservoir, approximately 4000 acres in size, offers good fishing for walleye, wiper, catfish, bass, and crappie. Additional species include bluegill, yellow perch, and rainbow trout. The reservoir has a State Park on the east end and a State Wildlife Area on the west end. For park hours, fees, and other information: <http://cpw.state.co.us/placestogo/parks/LakePueblo/>

Location: Pueblo County. The south entrance is located 5 miles west of Pueblo off of HWY 96 (Thatcher Blvd). The north entrance is south of HWY 50, and can be located by taking McCulloch Blvd. south from HWY 50 in Pueblo West, and turning south on Nichols Road.

Recreational Management: Colorado Parks and Wildlife (wildlife, 719-561-5300; Lake Pueblo State Park (719-561-9320) [click here to buy a fishing license](#))

Fishery Management: Warm and Cold water species. **Annual Survey Data:** (see page 2)

Amenities

- Boat Ramps (2)
- Picnic Areas
- Camping
- Restrooms
- Marinas (2)
- Hiking trails

Regulations

<https://cpw.state.co.us/aboutus/Pages/RegulationsBrochures.aspx>

- Daily bag for walleye is 5 fish over 18" in length with no more than 1 fish > 21"
- Minimum size for largemouth, smallmouth, and spotted bass is 15" in length
- Daily bag for wiper is 5 fish with no more than 1 fish > 21"
- Daily bag/possession for crappie is 10, minimum size of 10"
- Possessing filleted or cleaned fish in a boat on the lake is prohibited
- *See the regulations brochure for bag and possession limits of all other fish species*
- Fishing prohibited from dam & within 100 ft. of dam or walleye spawning nets Mar. 1 – Apr. 15, or until walleye spawning operations are complete

Previous Stocking

2019

- Black Crappie (1.5")
- Blue Catfish (3.5")
- Bluegill (1.5")
- Channel Catfish (3")
- Cutbow (10")
- Flathead Catfish (0.5")
- Largemouth Bass (0.3")
- Rainbow Trout (10")
- Wiper (0.3")
- Walleye (0.20")

2018

- Black Crappie (1.5")
- Blue Catfish (4")
- Channel Catfish (3")
- Cutbow (10")
- Flathead Catfish (0.5")
- Largemouth Bass (0.2")
- Rainbow Trout (10")
- Walleye (0.2")
- Wiper (0.2")

2017

- Black Crappie (1.5")
- Cutbow (10")
- Flathead Catfish (0.5")
- Largemouth Bass (1")
- Rainbow Trout (10")
- Walleye (0.2")
- Wiper (0.2")

Sportfishing Notes

Walleye

- Big walleye are present in good numbers because the regulations protect larger fish. This regulation gives anglers an opportunity to catch a trophy fish and allows for an egg take operation that supplies other Colorado waters with millions of young walleye.

Wiper

- Wiper provide a fishery for quality fish and allow anglers to take fish home for the table. Wiper fishing can be spotty and requires adaptability by anglers to catch these fish.

Bass

- Pueblo contains three species of bass: largemouth, smallmouth, and spotted. Many techniques are used to catch these fish and all can be caught virtually year round. A minimum size regulation allows some harvest while also protecting young fish and some spawning adults.



PUEBLO RESERVOIR

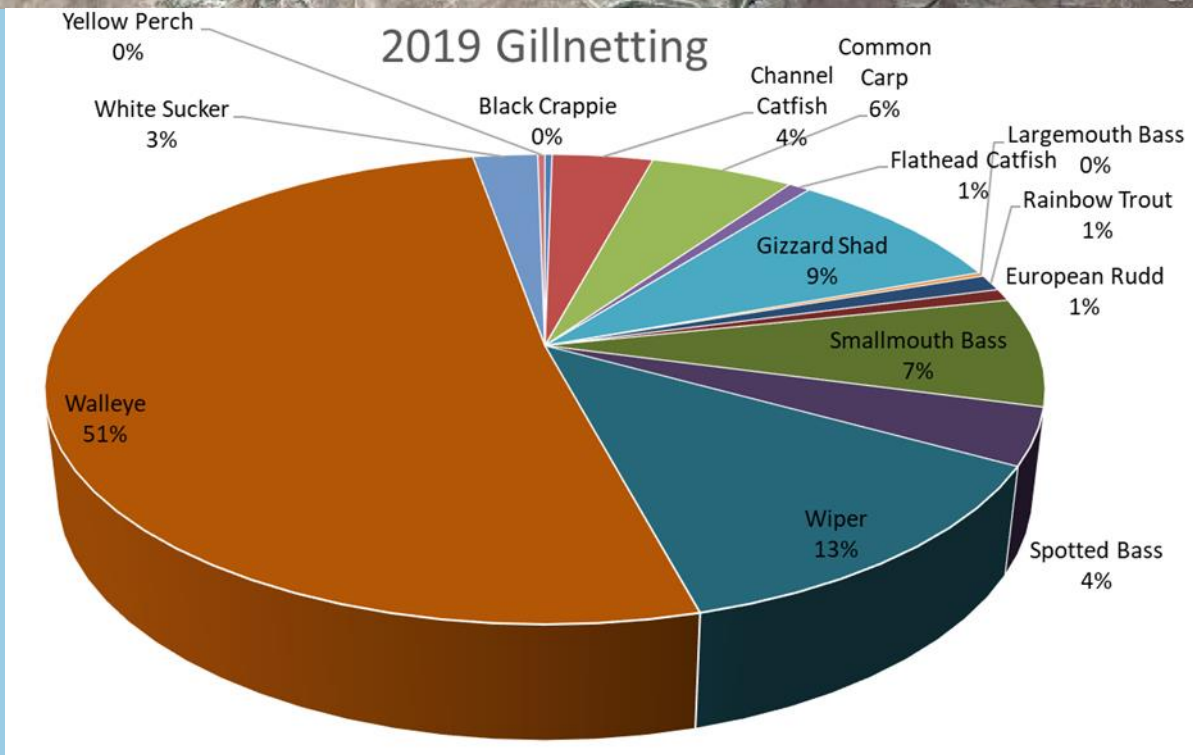
FISH SAMPLING DATA



2019 FALL SAMPLING (GILLNETTING)

https://www.google.com/maps/@38.2514350,-106.51028

Google earth





PUEBLO RESERVOIR

FISH SAMPLING DATA AND 2020 FORECAST

2019 FALL SAMPLING (GILLNETTING, CONTINUED)

Species	# Caught	CPUE Fish/Net	Length		Weight		PSD	Relative Weight
			Average (in)	Range	Average (lbs)	Range		
Black Crappie (BCR)	1	0.13	11.5	(11.5-11.5)	1.05	(1.05-1.05)	100	112.4
Channel Catfish (CCF)	14	1.75	23.5	(17.7-33.9)	6.73	(2.11-35.72)	100	108.0
Common Carp (CPP)	20	2.50	22.2	(16.9-24.5)	5.37	(2.38-6.66)	100	96.8
Flathead Catfish (FLC)	3	0.38	19.1	(17.4-21.2)	2.98	(2.24-4.22)	33.33	97.1
Gizzard Shad (GSD)	32	4.00	15.5	(14.2-16.9)	1.57	(1.13-2.20)	100	100.8
Largemouth Bass (LMB)	1	0.13	11.5	(11.5-11.5)	0.87	(0.87-0.87)	0	112.0
Rainbow Trout (RBT)	4	0.50	16.8	(15.4-18.2)	1.72	(1.40-2.05)	75	83.7
European Rudd (RUD)	3	0.38	13.2	(10.5-14.7)	1.46	(0.57-2.02)	-	112.9
Smallmouth Bass (SMB)	27	3.38	11.6	(3.4-15.6)	0.81	(0.19-1.72)	76	83.7
Spotted Bass (SPB)	14	1.75	13.4	(11.5-22.3)	1.11	(0.73-2.05)	100	89.3
Wiper (SXW)	46	5.75	16.7	(5.5-21.3)	2.73	(0.07-4.83)	100	93.0
Walleye (WAL)	185	23.13	15.2	(6.0-21.8)	1.20	(0.09-3.38)	69.89	87.9
White Sucker (WHS)	9	1.13	17.3	(12.4-19.1)	2.54	(0.78-3.06)	100	108.1
Yellow Perch (YPE)	1	0.13	6.5	(6.5-6.5)	0.10	(0.10-0.10)	0	73.6
TOTALS	360	45						





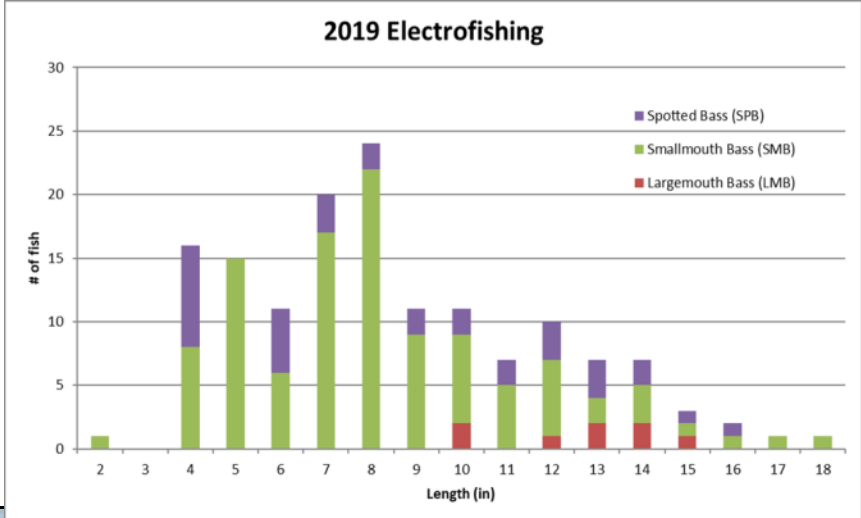
PUEBLO RESERVOIR

FISH SAMPLING DATA AND 2020 FORECAST

BLACK BASSES

Pueblo has three species of black bass (largemouth, smallmouth, and spotted). Numbers of bass in Pueblo Reservoir are high. Most fish are smaller than 15” in length, but some over 15” can be caught.

Bass were sampled through the use of night electrofishing in summer 2019. The majority of the catch was bass, with smallmouth bass being most predominant (see figure to right). The largemouth bass sampled were larger, between 10 and 15” in length. The largest size-group was 13-14 inches. The bass were in good condition (see figure at right).

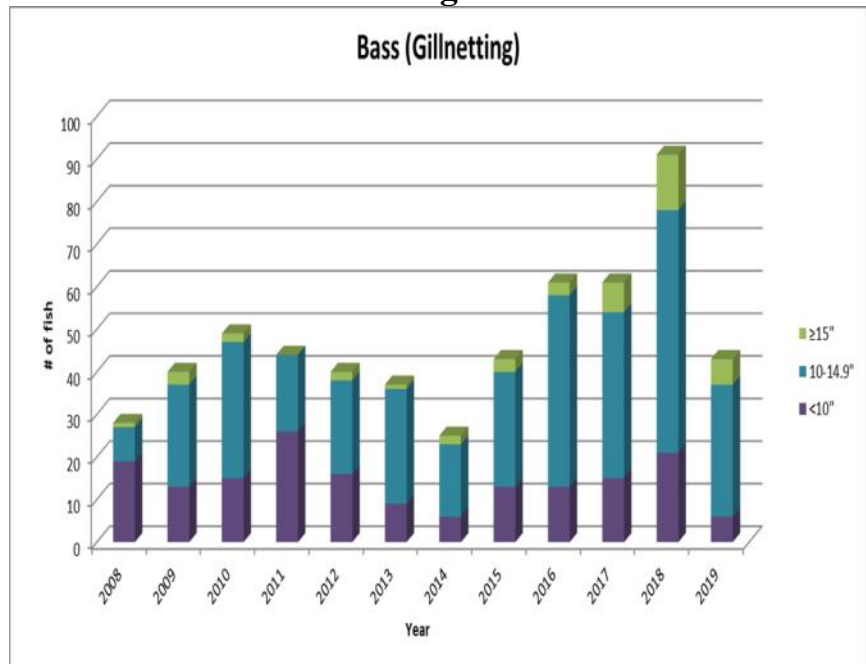


The length frequency of black bass collected via night electrofishing at Pueblo Reservoir in 2019.

Gillnetting

Six bass larger than 15” were sampled in 2019 gillnetting. Gillnetting is not the most productive way to catch bass, but many are sampled. However, trend data indicate that the majority of the bass population is between 10 and 15” in length, similar to the size structure seen during electrofishing. Age, growth, reproduction, and fishing pressure on bass will be assessed in the future.

Anglers should see good catches of bass in 2020, as there were a good number of 10-15” fish in fall 2019. Fishing is particularly good in the spring during spawning. Bass fishing has been exceptional at Pueblo, and should continue to be a premier location to fish for bass in 2020, with many tournaments occurring on the lake throughout the year.



The number of black bass (largemouth, smallmouth, and spotted) collected in gillnets at Pueblo Reservoir from 2008 to 2019.



PUEBLO RESERVOIR

FISH SAMPLING DATA AND 2020 FORECAST

WALLEYE

The total number of walleyes caught in gillnets in 2019 was again consistent with recent years, particularly the 11-17" length group (see figure below). Yet another large cohort of mid-range fish should lead to a better than average group of legal-sized fish in the near future. The 18" and over size group was larger than recent years. Gillnet samples do not do a good job of assessing the status of larger walleye in the reservoir. These larger fish are present in the reservoir in good numbers, but are difficult to catch, especially when gizzard shad are numerous. Average catches of walleye in Pueblo Reservoir yields around 3 to 7 legal fish per 100 fish caught. 2019 was a good year for legal walleye, and 2020 should be very similar with the high water levels expected through June.

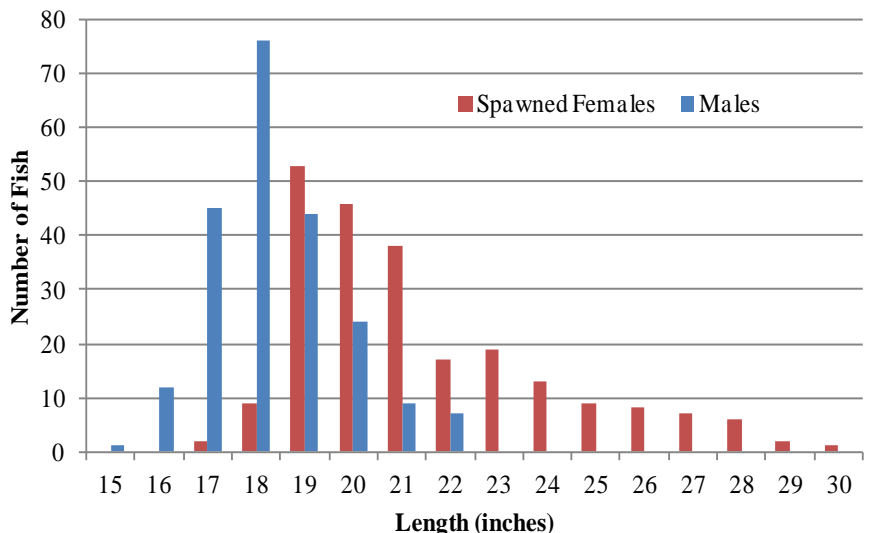


The walleye population in Pueblo Reservoir supports a spawning operation where biologists and hatcheries produce walleyes and saugeyes to stock in lakes and reservoirs throughout Colorado. These fish are also used to trade with other states so we can obtain fish we do not typically produce, like wiper.

The highest catch rates for walleye will usually occur from mid-May to the end of June. At this time the fish will be located on the flats and points in shallow water and will be feeding heavily as they recover from spawning efforts. Anglers looking for larger fish should use larger baits and move away from the large schools of small fish. Catch rates will be significantly lower, but quality of fish will be significantly higher.



The number of walleye collected in gillnets at Pueblo Reservoir from 2008 to 2019.



The number and sex of fish caught and spawned at Pueblo Reservoir walleye spawn, 2011.



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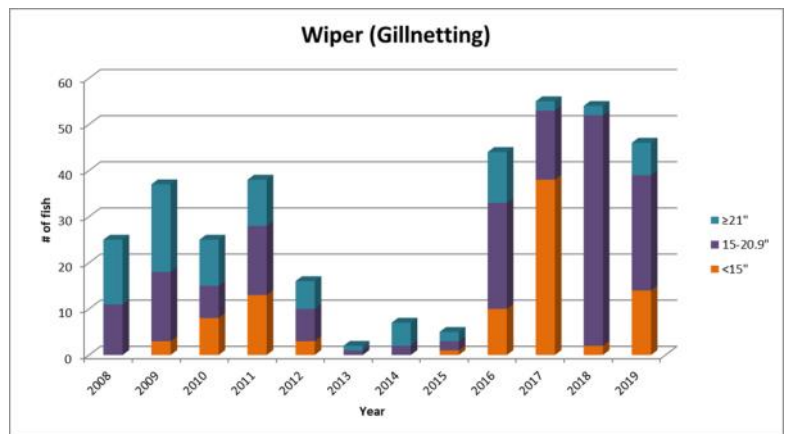
FISH SAMPLING DATA AND 2020 FORECAST

WIPER



Wiper have been stocked consistently in Pueblo Reservoir since the 80's. Weather conditions for stocking since 2016 have been better than in 2013 (see photo at left). During gillnetting, wiper caught in gillnets averaged 16.7 inches in length. The number of wipers has started to rebound over recent years, indicating that the population is growing and recovering (see figure below). Forty-six wiper were caught during sampling in 2019. There was a shift in the size of wipers caught in 2019; there were more wiper captured larger than 21" than the last two years combined. Fishing for wipers requires a lot of effort and patience as these fish are very particular about when and what they eat. Techniques to catch wipers change with the season and

availability and size of forage in the reservoir. Anglers must pay attention to the changes and adapt their techniques. Best times to catch wipers include April and May and August through October.



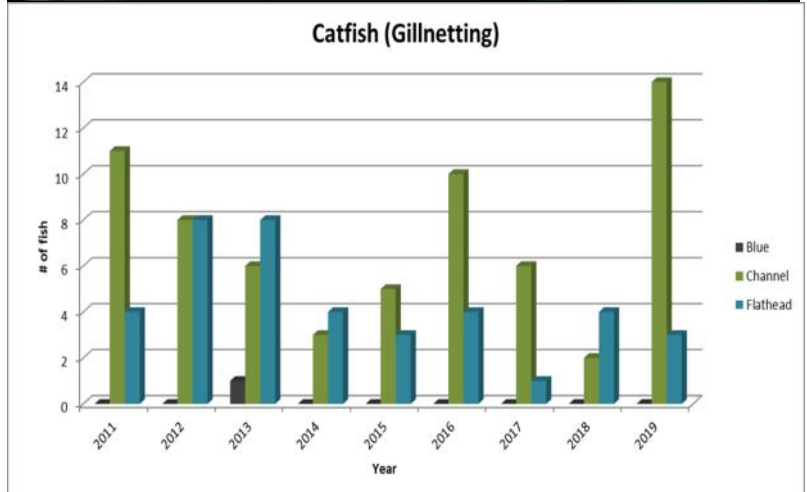
CATFISH

Pueblo has three species of catfish (channel, flathead, and blue). Numbers of catfish in Pueblo Reservoir have been fairly consistent in recent years and appear to be made up of fairly large fish. A good number of catfish over 18" can be caught.



Blue catfish, primarily discontinued from the stocking schedule due to poor survival, were stocked in 2013, 2015, 2018, and 2019. Blue catfish are rare, but the possibility of catching one is possible. The new state record was caught in 2019 and measured 38 5/8" and 29 lbs! Channel catfish are more abundant than flathead catfish, but the number of flatheads has increased in recent years.

The new state record for flathead catfish was caught in Pueblo Reservoir in 2017! It weighed 30 lbs and 38.63 inches. In 2019, catch rates for catfish will likely be decent, especially if you target them. The quality of fish could be very high.





PUEBLO RESERVOIR

2020 FORECAST AND MASTER ANGLER AWARDS

OTHER SPECIES

Pueblo Reservoir also contains fishable populations of black and white crappie, bluegill, yellow perch and rainbow trout. Both of the species of crappie can be caught year round in the reservoir at very good sizes. With the extremely high water levels in recent years, all of the trees and brush (especially on the west end) have been flooded for extended periods. This bodes very well for young fish survival, and should amount to another phenomenal year of fishing on the reservoir in 2020. A number of “catchable” (10”) trout are stocked in the North and South marina coves during the early spring. Anglers fishing January through March can catch some spawning rainbows that run from 16 to 24 inches in length. Boat anglers can also pick up these better trout by trolling from April through June.



MASTER ANGLER AWARDS

The Master Angler Recognition Program is designed to recognize anglers for success in their sport, as well as to promote the conservation of fishery resources and quality fishing by encouraging the careful release of trophy-size popular sport species. The program offers Master Angler award certificates in two general categories: fish caught and released, and fish caught and kept. Awards are based on fish length rather than weight. See <http://cpw.state.co.us/learn/Pages/MasterAngler.aspx> for more information.

2019 Pueblo Reservoir Master Anglers

2019 Master Angler Awards						
Name	Species	Length	Location	Month	Year	Status
Jerry Wyatt	walleye	26"	Pueblo Reservoir	April	2019	Kept
Anthony Gooch	crappie	14"	Pueblo Reservoir	May	2019	Released
David Vogt	smallmouth bass	18"	Pueblo Reservoir	May	2019	Released
Tony Steven Huskey	channel catfish	33 1/2"	Pueblo Reservoir	May	2019	Kept
Don Haggart	walleye	28 3/4"	Pueblo Reservoir	June	2019	Kept
Joseph Hill	largemouth bass	19"	Pueblo Reservoir	June	2019	Released
Melissa Didonato	crappie	14 1/2"	Pueblo Reservoir	June	2019	Released
Pete Vigil	smallmouth bass	18 1/2"	Pueblo Reservoir	July	2019	Released