



Ridgway Reservoir

FISH SURVEY AND MANAGEMENT INFORMATION

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General Information: Ridgway Reservoir provides angling opportunity for kokanee, splake, rainbow, and brown trout along with yellow perch and illegally introduced smallmouth bass. There is a strong population of trophy brown trout with fish over 30 inches possible. There is no limit on smallmouth bass and anglers are encouraged to catch and keep these illegally introduced fish. This reservoir, located on Ridgway State Park, covers 1030 surface acres at full capacity and is open year round to angling.

Location: From Montrose, travel 18 miles south on US Highway 550.

Primary Management: Coldwater Mixed Stocking Lake Category 505

Amenities

- Boat Ramps (1)
- Campground
- Restrooms
- Parking Areas
- Docks
- Bird Watching Areas
- Swim Beach

WARNING !!!

Prevent the Spread of Zebra Mussels and other Aquatic Nuisance Species

- Watch for anglers dumping smallmouth bass illegally into the reservoir and keep any smallmouth caught.
- Clean, drain, and dry your boat after each use.
- Adult mussels can attach to any surface and can live several days out of water in moist, shaded areas. Microscopic mussel larvae, known as veligers, can be transferred in water contained in live wells, bilge or ballast tanks.

Previous Stocking

2016

Rainbow Trout (10"): 60,666

Kokanee (1"): 0

2017

Rainbow Trout (10"): 68,535

Kokanee (1"): 20,458

2018

Rainbow Trout (10"): 93,379

Kokanee (1"): 20,000

2019

Rainbow Trout (10"): 114,724

Kokanee (1"): 20,102

Sportfishing Notes

Rainbow Trout

- Available throughout the reservoir, and typically willing to bite
- Good baits include worms or powerbait, spinners, black wooly buggers and crawfish imitations

Brown Trout

- Good areas include the west shoreline and area around the dam.
- Best fishing times include ice out, early spring and late fall
- Good baits include large plugs or spoons

Smallmouth Bass

- Please catch and keep all smallmouth bass.
- These fish are typically located near rocky shorelines
- Good baits include small soft plastic crayfish, worms, tubes or curly-tails.



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FISH SURVEY DATA
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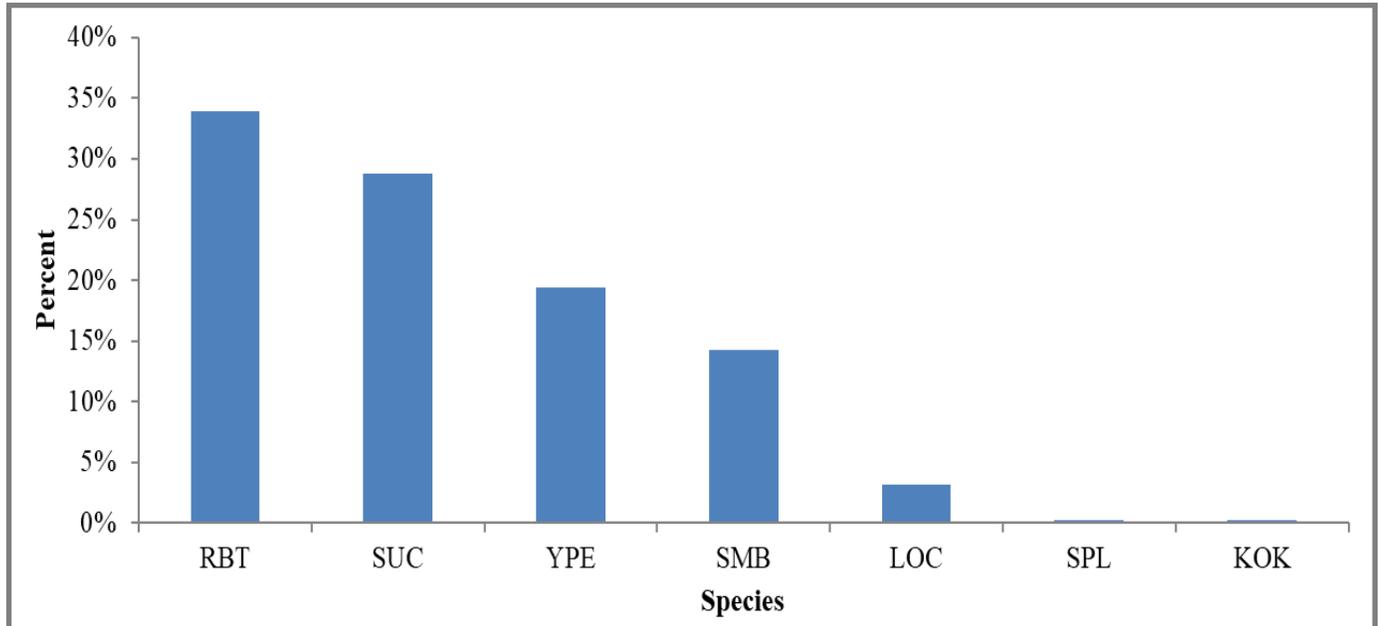


Figure 1. Relative abundance of rainbow trout (RBT), white and longnose suckers (SUC), yellow perch (YPE), smallmouth bass (SMB) brown trout (LOC), splake (SPL) and kokanee salmon captured in Ridgway Reservoir during a comprehensive 2014 fishery survey.

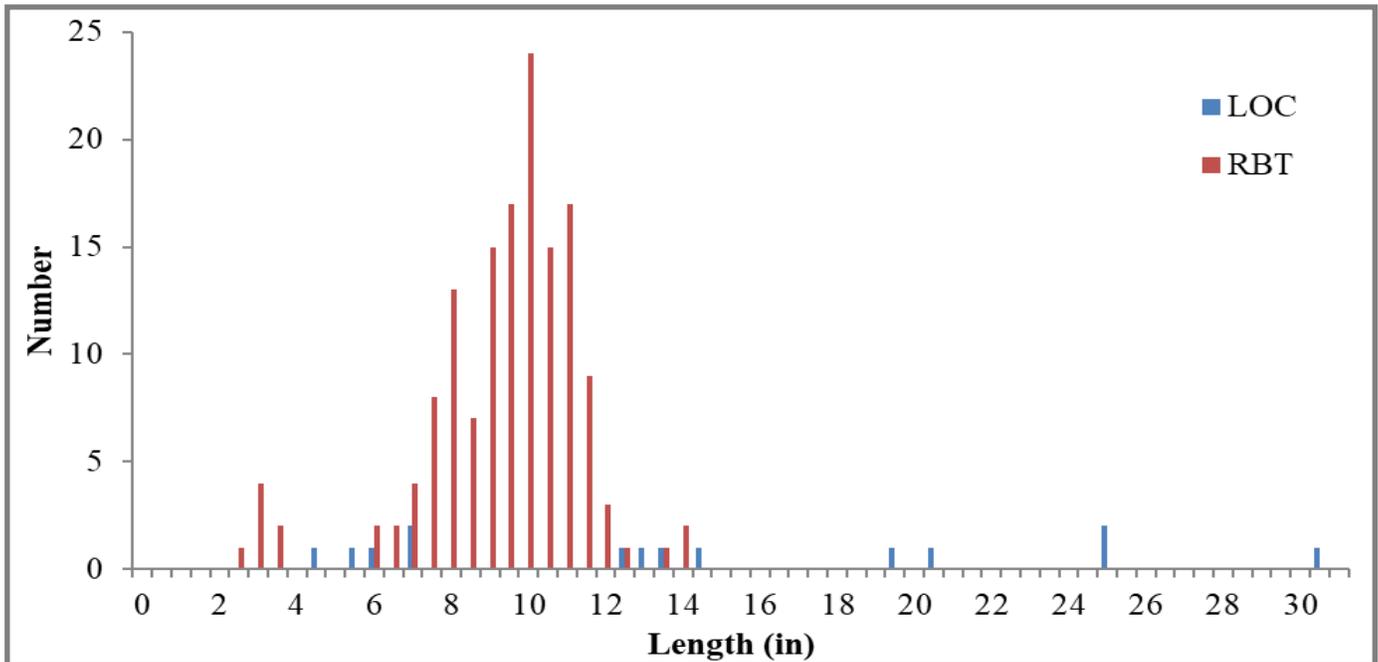


Figure 2. Length of brown (LOC; blue) and rainbow (RBT; red) trout captured from Ridgway Reservoir during comprehensive 2014 fishery survey. Rainbow trout are abundant at this State Park and offer fast fishing. The brown trout are not as numerous, and are difficult to catch, but do reach lengths of over 30 inches and 15 pounds.



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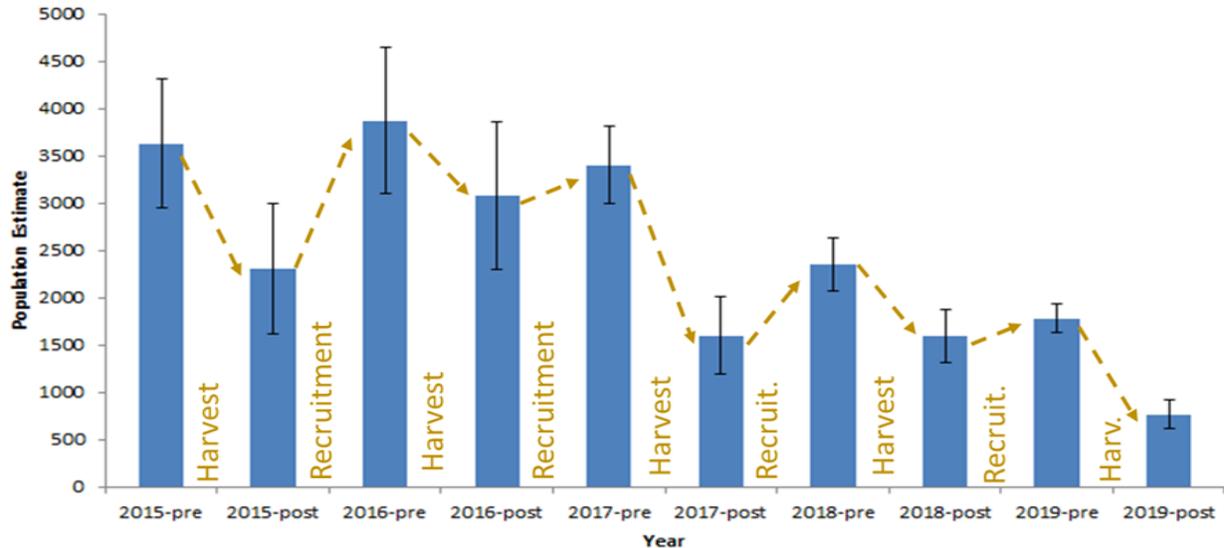


Figure 3. Population estimates for number of smallmouth bass over 4 inches both pre- and post-tournament for tournaments held in 2015-2019. Smallmouth bass were illegally introduced to this fishery in the early 2000s. They can be highly damaging to the native endangered fish species of the Colorado River basin, and this necessitates that management at Ridgway focus on reducing their numbers and preventing their escapement into waters downstream of the reservoir. Anglers have been highly effective at helping CPW manage this issue, and have reduced the number of smallmouth bass by 79 percent (from 3632 to 740 bass) in the five tournaments since 2015. Annually CPW awards around \$10k in prizes at each July tournament. Anglers should watch the CPW Facebook page for more details.



San Juan Mountain sunset from Ridgway Reservoir

Management Summary

The fishery at Ridgway Reservoir is primarily comprised of rainbow trout and kokanee salmon with trophy brown trout and splake available. Yellow perch also offer a good eating fish for anglers. Illegally introduced smallmouth bass are a threat to the fisheries downstream of the reservoir, but annual July tournaments have reduced their numbers substantially. Anglers are encouraged to participate in these tournaments, and to keep smallmouth bass that they catch at Ridgway Reservoir. Fishing at Ridgway Reservoir is best from a boat, as it allows access to more of the lake, but there are ample angling opportunities from shore at this beautiful State Park.