



Clear Creek

FISH SURVEY AND MANAGEMENT DATA

Paul Winkle, Aquatic Biologist, Denver
 paul.winkle@state.co.us / 303-291-7232

General Information: Clear Creek, with its headwaters at the foot of the Continental Divide, flows east through the towns of Georgetown and Idaho Springs and eventually into the South Platte River. From Georgetown downstream to the town of Golden, Clear Creek provides good fishing for wild brown trout. Between Georgetown and State Highway 40 the stream lies mostly on private property. There is good public access from Highway 40 downstream to Golden, with land owned by Clear Creek Open Space and Jeffco Open Space.

Location: Clear Creek County adjacent to Interstate 70, Jefferson County adjacent to State Highway 6.

Fishery Management: Coldwater angling.

Amenities and General Info.

- Approximately 30 miles of public angling access between Golden and Georgetown.
- The most continuous public angling access is in lower Clear Creek canyon between Golden and Idaho Springs
- Permanent restrooms at Georgetown Lake and businesses adjacent to I-70. Seasonal restrooms in Clear Creek canyon adjacent to Highway 6.

Fishing Regulations

- General regulations - daily bag limit for trout (in aggregate) is 4 fish, possession limit is 8 fish.
- In addition to above, the daily bag and possession limit for brook trout 8 inches and less is 10 fish.

Previous Stocking

2011

Rainbow Trout

2010

Rainbow Trout

2009

Rainbow Trout

2008

Cuttbows

2007

Cuttbows

2006

Rainbow Trout

2005

Rainbow Trout

Sportfishing Notes

Water Quality

- The Argo Treatment plant in Idaho Springs began treating metals-laden water from the Argo Tunnel in 1998.
- Trout populations downstream of Idaho Springs have generally improved since then.

Brown Trout

- Historically, the most abundant trout species between Georgetown and Golden, making up about 95 percent of the fish present.
- These are wild, naturally reproducing fish.
- Spawn from October through November.

Rainbow Trout

- Although stocked annually, make up only about 5 percent of the trout present between Georgetown and Golden, due to whirling disease.
- Beginning in 2009 a WD resistant strain will be stocked annually, probably increasing survival and abundance.



Clear Creek

FISH SURVEY AND MANAGEMENT DATA

Paul Winkle, Aquatic Biologist, Denver
 paul.winkle@state.co.us / 303-291-7232

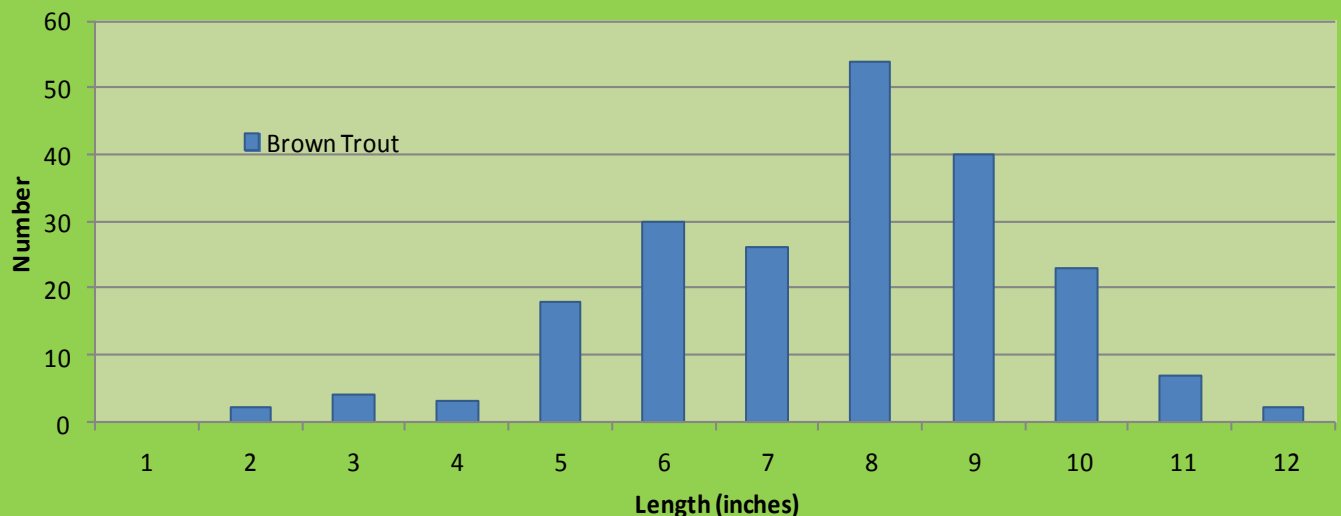
Clear Creek at Empire



The figure to the left shows the abundance of brown trout greater than 6" collected in Clear Creek just below the Empire exit on Interstate 70 from 2006 to 2011. Brown trout in Clear Creek are not stocked, they sustain their populations through natural reproduction. Densities of brown trout at this site have been stable since at least 2006. Although rainbow trout are stocked near Idaho Springs, very few have been collected at this site. The use of whirling disease resistant rainbows beginning in 2009 should increase the number of wild rainbows in Clear Creek.

The figure below shows the length frequencies in 2011 of brown trout in Clear Creek just below the Empire exit on Interstate 70. The vertical bars represent the number of fish at a particular length. The majority of the catchable-size brown trout collected were 8 to 10 inches, with a few brown trout up to 12 inches in length. Whirling disease is present in Clear Creek, which resulted in low survival of stocked rainbow trout prior to 2009. However, as stated above, resistant strains were stocked beginning in 2009, so rainbow survival should increase in Clear Creek in future years. It is hoped that eventually a wild population of rainbow trout will be established in Clear Creek.

Clear Creek at Empire, 2011



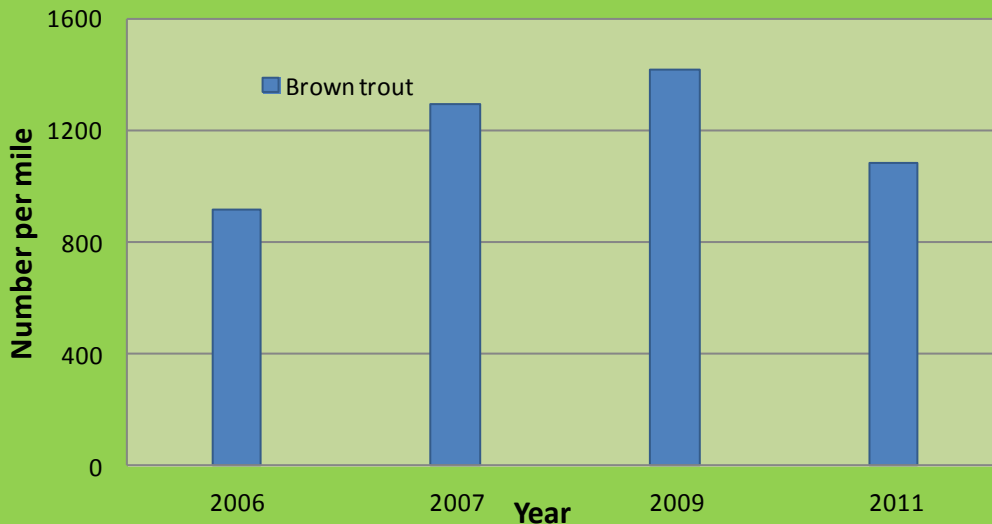


Clear Creek

FISH SURVEY AND MANAGEMENT DATA

Paul Winkle, Aquatic Biologist, Denver
paul.winkle@state.co.us / 303-291-7232

Clear Creek Below Idaho Springs



The figure to the left shows the abundance of brown trout greater than 6" collected just below Idaho Springs from 2006 to 2011. Brown trout densities were not as high as the site just below the Empire exit, ranging from 900 to 1,400 fish per mile. Only a few rainbow trout were collected at this site; their densities are directly dependent on annual stocking events. Stocking of whirling disease resistant strains of rainbows beginning in 2009 should increase their numbers in the future.

The figure below shows the length frequencies in 2011 of brown trout from Clear Creek just below Idaho Springs. The vertical bars represent the number of fish at a particular length. The majority of the catchable-size brown trout collected were 8 to 9 inches, with a few fish up to 10 inches. Only one rainbow trout was collected here in 2011. It is hoped that whirling disease rainbows stocked starting in 2009 will migrate through the drainage and create a new wild population.

Clear Creek Below Idaho Springs, 2011

