

Gross Reservoir

FISH SURVEY AND MANAGEMENT DATA

Benjamin Swigle - Aquatic Biologist (Fort Collins/Boulder)
ben.swigle@state.co.us / 970-472-4364

General Information: Gross Reservoir (440 surface acres) is a storage reservoir owned and operated by Denver Water. Shore angling and limited boat access (see regulations) are allowed. Anglers can expect to catch rainbow trout, brown trout, splake, kokanee salmon and tiger muskie. Open to ice fishing. More information: <http://www.denverwater.org/Recreation/GrossReservoir/>

Location: 18 miles west of Boulder via Flagstaff Road, also accessible via HWY 72 (Nederland or Golden).

Recreational Management: Forest Service—Boulder District

Purchase a fishing license: <http://wildlife.state.co.us/ShopDOW/AppsAndLicenses/>

Fishery Management: Coldwater angling

Amenities

- Primitive Restrooms
- Hiking Trails
- Wildlife Viewing
- Day-use picnic areas
- Ice Fishing

Regulations

- Operation Hours - sunrise to sunset.
- Watercraft: carry-on, non-motorized boats only (canoes, kayaks, row boats). Belly boats, sail boats, and all trailer hitched boats are **NOT** allowed. Call 303-634-3641 for more information.
- Swimming, wading, and diving are prohibited.
- Kokanee snagging allowed Sept. 1—Jan. 31.
- Min. size for Tiger Muskie is 36" (1 fish).
- Use or possession of live fish as bait is prohibited (and strictly enforced).
- Ice fish IS allowed – please use extreme caution.

Previous Stocking

2011

Hofer Strain Rainbow
Kokanee Salmon
Snake River Cutthroat
Rainbow Trout

2010

Brown Trout
Hofer Strain Rainbow
Kokanee Salmon
Snake River Cutthroat
Rainbow Trout

2009

Kokanee Salmon
Hofer Strain Rainbow
Lake Trout (Mackinaw)
Rainbow Trout

2008

Kokanee Salmon
Rainbow Trout
Splake (Lake x Brook)
Tiger Muskie

Sportfishing Notes

Trout

• All trout species are stocked as sub-catchables (3-5"). As a result trout generally prefer flies and artificial lures compared with power bait or worms.

Kokanee

• Fall run to the inlet typically occurs in October.
• Besides snagging (see regulations), small flies (#18+) at times attract a kokanee.

Tiger Muskie

• Huge tigers are present in Gross; they appear to roam lake-wide.
• Tigers are stocked in relatively low numbers to provide a diversified fishery and control suckers.



Named for Denver Water former Chief Engineer Dwight D. Gross, the reservoir was completed in 1954. It serves as a combination storage and regulating facility for water that flows under the Continental Divide through the Moffat Tunnel. Gross Reservoir has a surface area of 440 acres at full pool and 10.9 miles of shoreline.

With the allowance of carry-on boating, Gross Reservoir has become a more frequent fishing destination for Front Range anglers. Gross is fed by South Boulder Creek. Fishing opportunities exist within the reservoir, below the dam, near the inlet, and on the ice when conditions permit. Good portions of Gross's shoreline is also accessible to both anglers and hikers.

Because of Gross's steep shoreline and profound depth, this reservoir is one of the more difficult waters in the NE to accurately evaluate. White and longnose sucker continue to dominate (abundance is declining) while rainbow trout represent the dominant trout species present. Ultimately I would like to see the proportion of suckers drop below 50% of the total catch. Accordingly predatory species including lake trout and brown trout have been stocked in recent years. Tiger muskie, a sterile hybrid, will continue to be stocked annually if available.

Arrows indicate locations where Kokanee are typically stocked. The size of the arrow illustrates a larger number of stocked fish.

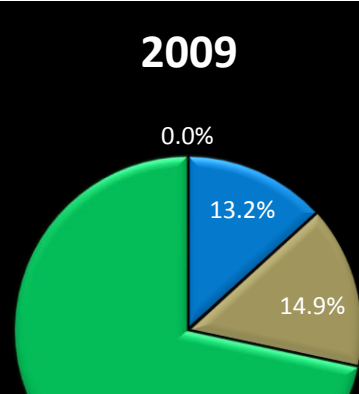
09/13/2011 Survey Summary (10 gillnets fished overnight)

2011 Gillnet Survey Species	# Caught	% Total Catch	Average Length (Range) Inches	Average Weight (lbs)
Brown Trout	12	6.2%	14.3 (9 - 18)	1.23
Kokanee Salmon	2	1.0%	15.8 (15 - 17)	1.44
Lake Trout	13	6.7%	11.2 (7 - 15)	0.45
Longnose Sucker	67	34.5%	11.3 (7 - 17)	0.74
Rainbow Trout	65	33.5%	7.8 (6 - 14)	0.22
Snake River Cutthroat	1	0.5%	11.4	0.51
Splake (Brook x Lake)	3	1.5%	12.9 (10 - 15)	0.72
White Sucker	31	16.0%	15.5 (6 - 20)	1.76

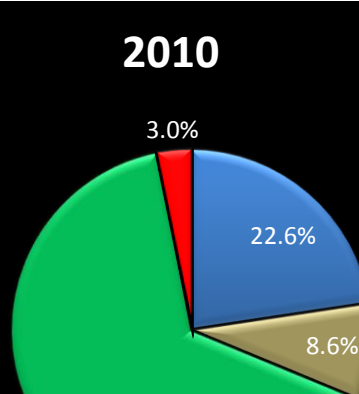
09/16/2010 Survey Summary (10 gillnets fished overnight)

2010 Gillnet Survey Species	# Caught	% Total Catch	Average Length (Range) Inches	Average Weight (lbs)
Brown Trout	10	4.3%	12.0 (7 - 19)	0.84
Kokanee Salmon	7	3.0%	15.8 (15 - 17)	1.44
Lake Trout	7	3.0%	10.5 (7 - 14)	0.40
Longnose Sucker	85	37.0%	9.6 (6 - 14)	0.42
Rainbow Trout	45	19.6%	9.9 (7 - 17)	0.46
Snake River Cutthroat	7	3.0%	8.2 (7 - 9)	0.21
Splake (Brook x Lake)	3	1.3%	11.9 (11 - 12)	0.59
White Sucker	66	28.7%	17.4 (16 - 19)	2.33

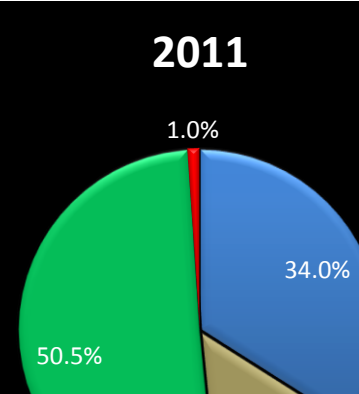
2009



2010



2011



- Rainbow/Cutthroat
- Lake/Splake/Brown
- White/Longnose Sucker
- Kokanee

Above: The proportion of the total gill net catch by year in Gross Reservoir. New management goals were installed in 2008 which seek to reduce white and longnose sucker relative abundance closer to 50% while increasing the total proportion of sport fish (trout and salmon) near the 50% benchmark. Stocking Lake Trout (2009) and brown trout (2010) has moved the fishery closer to this goal. In addition, a switch in the particular strain of rainbow trout (hofer) stocked also appears to be improving sport fish abundance. With a whole lot of help from the hatchery section, Gross Reservoir is slowly becoming a better fishery. It should be noted that Kokanee are very difficult to survey (more information on this species below). I will keep everyone posted as this story unfolds.



Left: A tiger muskie measuring 39 inches collected during the 2008 survey. This fish weighed 18 pounds and was released unharmed. In order to create a more balanced fish community, predatory species such as the tiger muskie will continue to be stocked in Gross Reservoir. At present, tiger muskie are only available through out-of-state trades. Accordingly, annual availability is limited.

Kokanee Salmon: Kokanee are stocked annually in Gross Reservoir however, the annual survey evaluates the fish community in September or before most kokanee begin migratory "runs". As a result detection of this species is difficult. Success of the annual kokanee run is in part gauged from direct input by anglers, the rangers at Gross Reservoir, and district wildlife officers. Anglers can directly help out by recording the number of hours spent actively fishing specifically for kokanee combined with the total number of caught. I certainly welcome your emails.

Kokanee stocking generally occurs during May of each year. Typically, the 2-inch fingerlings are stocked from a boat as close as possible to the South Boulder Creek inlet. At the time of stocking the reservoir is usually near "low pool" which limits the ability to move the stocking boat "upstream". During 2009, salmon were stocked in the reservoir as well as 4 miles upstream of the reservoir in South Boulder Creek. In 3-4 years these fish will migrate and become more accessible to angling during the fall "run". Better spawn take number from Blue Mesa/Roaring Judy will allow Gross to receive 75,000 kokanee for the reservoir and 25,000 fish to stock in South Boulder Creek above Gross.

Kokanee fingerlings from the hatchery.



Loading kokanee for boat stocking at Gross.



About 4 years later, caught by an angler at Gross!



Boat stocking the kokanee fingerlings in Gross.

