



Jackson Reservoir

FISH SURVEY AND MANAGEMENT DATA

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General Information: Jackson Reservoir is a 2,967 acre water (at full capacity). Anglers can expect quality fishing for wiper, walleye, saugeye, channel catfish, and rainbow trout. Please visit the state park website at: <http://parks.state.co.us/parks/jacksonlake/> for updated water and fishing conditions.

Location: Morgan County. From the I-76/Hwy 34 interchange take Hwy 39 7.2 miles north, through the town of Goodrich, to CR Y5. Take CR Y5 2.5 miles west to the reservoir.

Recreational Management: Colorado Parks and Wildlife

Fishery Management: Warmwater angling

Purchase a Fishing License: <http://wildlife.state.co.us/ShopDOW/AppsAndLicenses/>

Amenities

- Informational kiosks
- Boat ramp
- Picnic areas
- Modern restrooms
- RV hook-ups
- Tent camping
- Hiking trails
- Ice fishing

Regulations

- Min. size for walleye and saugeye is 15" (only 1 can exceed 21").
- Min. size for wiper is 15".
- Statewide bag and possession limits also apply.
- Fishing the outlet ditch below the dam or near the rotary screen is prohibited as posted.
- Portable ice fishing shelters only.
- Entry requires a Colorado State Parks Pass, which is available on site.
- Clean, drain, and dry all watercraft before launching on and after leaving the reservoir to avoid the spread of aquatic nuisance species.

Previous Stocking

2011

Walleye
 Saugeye
 Channel catfish
 Black crappie
 Bluegill
 Rainbow trout and Cuttbow

2010

Saugeye
 Wiper
 Channel catfish
 Bluegill
 Rainbow trout and Cuttbow

2009

Walleye
 Saugeye
 Channel catfish
 Black crappie
 Rainbow trout and Cuttbow

2008

Saugeye
 Wiper
 Channel catfish
 Black crappie
 Cuttbow

Sportfishing Notes

Wiper

- Fish are often found chasing shad, so let the seagulls guide you.
- Fish the inlet when the reservoir is filling and fish open water at other times.
- Shad imitations or green mussels work well.

Walleye and Saugeye

- Though annual surveys typically yield good numbers, anglers tend to have limited success.
- Try trolling shad raps and wally divers.

Channel catfish

- Fishing the bottom off of the dam is recommended.
- Cut shad or shrimp as bait work well.

Rainbow trout and Cuttbow

- Shore and ice anglers do well using night crawlers and powerbait.
- Boat anglers do well using small shad raps.



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About the Reservoir...

The South Platte Land, Reservoir, and Irrigation Company finished building Jackson Reservoir 1902, making the reservoir approximately 110 years old. Water used to fill the reservoir is taken from the South Platte River near Riverside Reservoir, and flows down an 11-mile long earthen canal before reaching Jackson Reservoir. Similar to other eastern plains reservoirs, Jackson Reservoir was built to store irrigation water for agricultural use. Though some people began fishing the reservoir shortly after it was constructed, it wasn't until the early 1960s that people really began to understand the recreation potential the reservoir had to offer. In 1965, Jackson Lake State Park was established and the former Colorado Game, Fish and Parks Department began managing the fishery.

From 1965 to 1970 the three fish species most often caught by anglers were bullhead, yellow perch, and crappie. In the 1970s the catch shifted to yellow perch, bullhead, and walleye. Catch shifted again in the 1980s to crappie, walleye, and yellow perch. In 1988, the former Colorado Division of Wildlife began stocking wiper (♂ white bass x ♀ striped bass hybrid) and rainbow trout to increase angler catch rates, and these two species have been the primary fish caught ever since.

Jackson Reservoir is primarily managed as a warmwater fishery. For nearly 16 years, a heavy emphasis was placed on wiper management due to the large success of this species in the reservoir. Though wiper did well for many years, wiper stocked in the reservoir since 2005 have had poor recruitment or have completely failed to recruit to the population. Additionally, shortages in the availability of wiper have made managing for this species very challenging. More often than not, wiper from other states are needed to augment the number of wiper produced in Colorado to meet stocking schedule quotas. And, biologists have had limited success with wiper plants from other states.

To overcome wiper shortages in 2005 to 2011, higher numbers of walleye and saugeye (♂ sauger x ♀ walleye hybrid) were stocked into Jackson Reservoir as surrogate predators in 2006, 2007, 2009, 2010, and 2011. These two species have had great recruitment success in the reservoir. Moreover, walleye and saugeye are easy to spawn and rear, making them readily available. The coupling of the success of these two species and the recruitment and availability issues with wiper could result in another management shift at Jackson Reservoir. Managing for a predator balance of 50% wiper to 50% walleye and saugeye is being considered.



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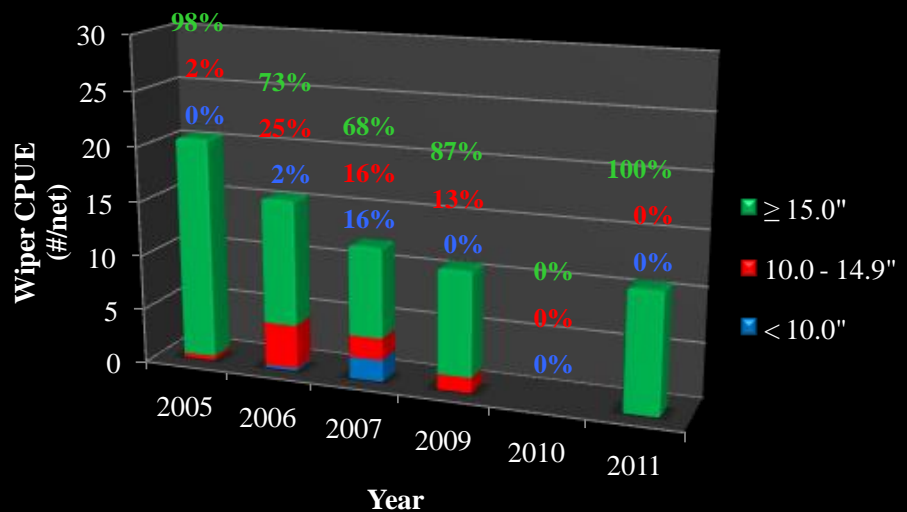


Wiper

Though no wiper were caught during the 2010 annual survey, wiper were caught in 2011 (Figure 1), indicating that the lack of wiper in 2010 was due to net placement, as suspected. Though a respectable number of wiper were caught during the 2011 annual survey (Table 1), no age-1 (5 to 8") fish were caught; thus, the fry stocked in 2010 failed to recruit to the population (Figure 1). The lack of younger age-classes is less than desirable because fish in these age-classes would form the future wiper population. The lack of younger age-classes is a direct result of poor recruitment and the low availability of wiper for stocking. If and when avail-

ability increases, fry will be stocked again to ensure the wiper population is maintained for anglers.

Figure 1. Wiper catch-per-unit-effort (CPUE) during the 2005 to 2007 and 2009 to 2011 annual surveys at Jackson Reservoir. No annual survey was conducted in 2008. For comparative purposes, the number of fish collected was standardized per gillnet. The percentages above the columns indicate the proportion of fish in each size-class caught (colors correspond to lengths in the legend).





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About the Fish...

Table 1. Summary data for fish caught during the 2011 annual survey at Jackson Reservoir. Data are based on 65 hours of gillnetting and 55 hours of trap netting.

Species	Number caught	Relative abundance (%)	Average length (in)	Length range (in)	Average weight (lbs)	Weight range (lbs)
Wiper	44	9.54	20.3	17.3 - 26.9	4.8	1.8 - 10.3
Walleye	139	30.15	14.8	4.9 - 23.7	1.49	0.0 - 5.8
Saugeye	49	10.63	11.7	7.1 - 20.1	0.84	0.0 - 3.4
Largemouth bass	6	1.30	6.1	5.3 - 6.7	0.12	0.0 - 0.2
Channel catfish	3	0.65	18.7	7.9 - 27.8	4.06	0.2 - 8.5
Black crappie	51	11.06	4.1	2.6 - 10.7	0.05	0.0 - 0.8
White crappie	26	5.64	3.8	2.5 - 7.4	0.05	0.0 - 0.3
Yellow perch	1	0.22	10.9	10.9 - 10.9	0.67	0.7 - 0.7
Bluegill	33	7.16	4.0	1.2 - 5.2	0.05	0.0 - 0.1
Freshwater drum	24	5.21	9.5	4.9 - 17.3	0.50	0.2 - 3.3
Common carp	6	1.30	21.5	12.3 - 26.8	5.18	0.8 - 10.4
White sucker	3	0.65	13.5	12.9 - 14.2	1.17	0.9 - 1.4
Gizzard shad	76	16.49	10.8	2.3 - 17.3	0.82	0.0 - 2.1

Walleye and saugeye

Unlike the wiper population, which has declined in the past five years (Figure 1), Jackson Reservoir's walleye and saugeye populations have grown (Figure 2). Furthermore, higher numbers of walleye and saugeye than wiper have been caught during the last five annual surveys. These trends are due to the high recruitment of walleye and saugeye (Figure 2), poor recruitment of wiper (Figure 1), and low availability of wiper. In contrast to wiper (Figure 1), the size distribution of walleye and saugeye has also been good, with all size-classes present each year (Figure 2). Of the walleye and saugeye sampled during the 2011 annual survey, 39% exceeded the 15" minimum size limit and 47% were 10.0 to 14.9" long (Figure 2). Several fish in the 10.0 to 14.9" size-class should exceed the 15" minimum by the spring of 2012. Due to the large success of these species in recent years, anglers can expect better fishing for walleye and saugeye.





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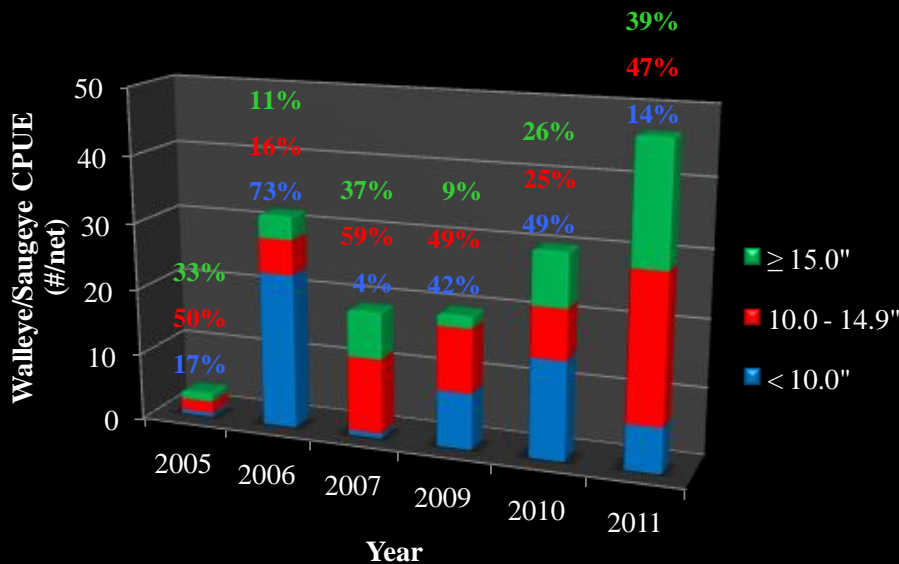


Figure 2. Walleye and saugeye catch-per-unit-effort (CPUE) during the 2005 to 2007 and 2009 to 2011 annual surveys at Jackson Reservoir. No annual survey was conducted in 2008. For comparative purposes, the number of fish collected was standardized per gillnet. The percentages above the columns indicate the proportion of fish in each size-class caught (colors correspond to lengths in the legend).

Channel catfish

Stocking of channel catfish into Jackson Reservoir began in 1959, and approximately 115,500 fish have been stocked since 2005. Regardless of stocking rates, few channel catfish are sampled in nets during annual surveys. It is likely that these low numbers do not accurately reflect the fish population, but the sedentary nature of channel catfish instead. This species tends to lay low as water temperatures decline in the fall, which is when the annual surveys are conducted. Hook-and-line usually produces more fish than gillnets, so anglers should not be discouraged to fish for this species. Three channel catfish, measuring 18.7" and weighing 4.06 lbs on average, were caught during the 2011 annual survey (Table 1). Larger channel catfish are undoubtedly lurking in Jackson Reservoir.

Black crappie

Anglers caught more black crappie at Jackson Reservoir than any other species during the 1980s. After wiper were stocked (1988), fewer black crappie were caught by anglers and in annual surveys, presumably due to wiper predation. Low black crappie numbers can also be attributed to drastic water level fluctuations and limited habitat that lead to poor survival. Anglers often have difficulty locating this species at Jackson Reservoir. Anglers seeking black crappie are encouraged to fish Prewitt Reservoir, North Sterling Reservoir, Jumbo Reservoir, or Jumbo Annex Reservoir.

Rainbow trout and cuttbow

Stocking of rainbow trout and cuttbow (cutthroat trout x rainbow trout hybrid) into Jackson Reservoir began in 1988 and 2006, respectively. Approximately 15,000 catchable (10") rainbow trout and cuttbow will be stocked throughout the 2012 fishing season. These plants will represent the highest stocking rate since 2007, and should provide a substantial boost in angler catch rates.



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Master Angler Awards

<u>Year</u>	<u>Species</u>	<u>Length</u>	<u>Angler name</u>
2011	Smallmouth bass	20"	Mitchell Ellis
2011	Freshwater drum	20"	Makayla DeFebio
2011	Common carp	34"	Marlee Davis
2011	Common carp	32"	Chris Davis
2011	Common carp	30 1/2"	Chris DeFebio
2011	Common carp	30"	Forrest Czarnecki
2010	Common carp	35"	Thomas Gipple
2009	Wiper	29"	Jennifer Lockman
2009	Channel catfish	31 1/2"	Adam Barg
2009	Brown trout	22 1/2"	Rick Dunn
2009	Common carp	30"	Derek Mitchell
2008	Wiper	28 5/8"	Ursula Lottman
2008	Channel catfish	32 1/2"	David Sanger
2008	Channel catfish	32"	Richard Watts
2008	Common carp	32"	Derek Mitchell

