



Prewitt Reservoir

FISH SURVEY AND MANAGEMENT DATA

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General Information: Prewitt Reservoir is a 2,431 acre water (at full capacity). Anglers can expect quality fishing for walleye, saugeye, channel catfish, and black crappie. Wiper, northern pike, and rainbow trout can also be caught. Wakeless boating is permitted.

Location: Logan and Washington Counties. From I-76 take the Merino Exit and head 1 mile north to Hwy 6. Take Hwy 6 3.3 miles northeast 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

- Boat ramp
- Picnic areas
- Primitive restrooms
- Camping
- Hiking trails
- Wildlife viewing
- 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.
- Ice fishing is restricted to within 50 yards of the dam.
- NO boat angling allowed from Oct. 1 through last day of regular goose season.
- Boating is prohibited if it creates a whitewater wake.
- 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
Rainbow trout and Cutbow

2010

Saugeye
Channel catfish
Black crappie
Bluegill
Cutbow

2009

Saugeye
Channel catfish
Black crappie
Bluegill
Rainbow trout

2008

Walleye
Saugeye
Wiper
Channel catfish
Black crappie
Rainbow trout and Cutbow

Sportfishing Notes

Walleye/Saugeye

- Fishing during early spring produces the best numbers.
- Boat anglers do well trolling shad raps and wally divers during late spring and early summer.
- Areas near the boat ramp and the south shore represent traditional hot-spots.

Channel catfish

- Shore anglers generally do as well as boat anglers.
- Cut shad or shrimp as bait work well.

Black crappie

- Fish the west end of the reservoir in 5 feet of water during April and May.
- Later in the year the reservoir is drawn down, limiting the amount of structure and making it difficult to locate this species.



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About the Reservoir...

Constructed in 1908, Prewitt Reservoir is 104 years old. The reservoir has a maximum depth of 25 feet and a mean depth of 11 feet. With exception of the willows, cottonwoods, and smartweed that grow near the inlet, the reservoir virtually devoid of structure.

The reservoir is managed as a recharge impoundment, meaning outflows to the South Platte River are strategically timed to offset reduced river flows caused by irrigation and aquifer pumping. During a typical year, Prewitt Reservoir is drawn down to approximately one-half of its maximum

volume (Figure 1). While this water management regime supplies much needed water to the South Platte River, it has negative impacts on the reservoir's fishery. As water is released from the reservoir, some fish get flushed into the river. Remaining fish are subject to water draw-down which eliminates littoral habitat that young fish would normally use to escape predation. The risk of being consumed is heightened as the water level continues to drop and fish are concentrated into a successively smaller pool.

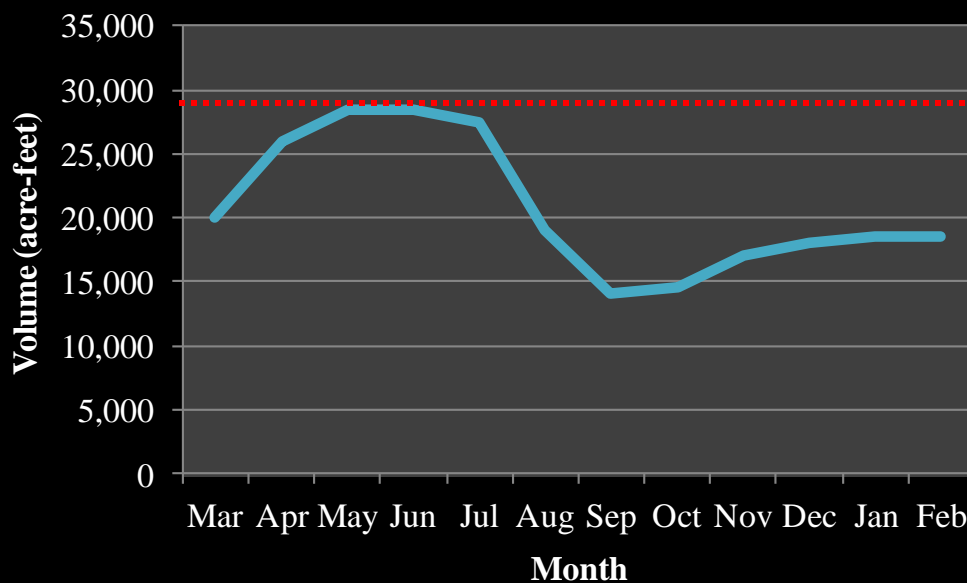


Figure 1. Water level fluctuation at Prewitt Reservoir during a typical year. The reservoir usually reaches full capacity (red dotted line) prior to the irrigation season, which begins in May. During the irrigation season (May-October), water is released from the reservoir to augment flows in the South Platte River, drawing the reservoir down to approximately one-half of its capacity. Refilling usually begins near the end of October, is suspended during the winter months (December-February) to protect the dam, and resumes again in the spring (March).

Though it can be trying for young fish to survive in these conditions, Prewitt's dead pool (6 feet deep) is substantial enough to support many of the older, larger fish until the reservoir refills.



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About the Fish...

Gizzard shad

Gizzard shad are relied upon as the primary prey species in many of Colorado's reservoirs because they are highly prolific (250,000 eggs per female), broadcast spawners. Because sportfish target smaller, young-of-the-year fish that they can fit into their mouths, gizzard shad must successfully spawn to contribute to the forage base. Furthermore, large numbers of shad must be successful to produce enough young to adequately support the biomass of sportfish. In that sense, having large numbers of gizzard shad in a reservoir can be advantageous. However, abundant gizzard shad can make angling difficult because competition among sportfish for the plentiful food is lowered.

Walleye, saugeye (♂ sauger x ♀ walleye hybrid), and wiper (♂ white bass x ♀ striped bass hybrid) fishing began to slow down in 2008 as Prewitt Reservoir's gizzard shad population expanded, and was extremely slow during the 2009 and 2010 fishing seasons due to a severely over-abundant prey base (Figure 2). Fortunately, many gizzard shad succumbed to winter-kill prior to the 2011 fishing season, creating greater competition among predators. In turn, the fishing began to pick up again. It is anticipated that the walleye and saugeye populations, which comprised 50% of the catch during the 2011 annual survey, will help control the gizzard shad population (Figure 3). If this occurs, anglers can expect better fishing at Prewitt Reservoir in the future.

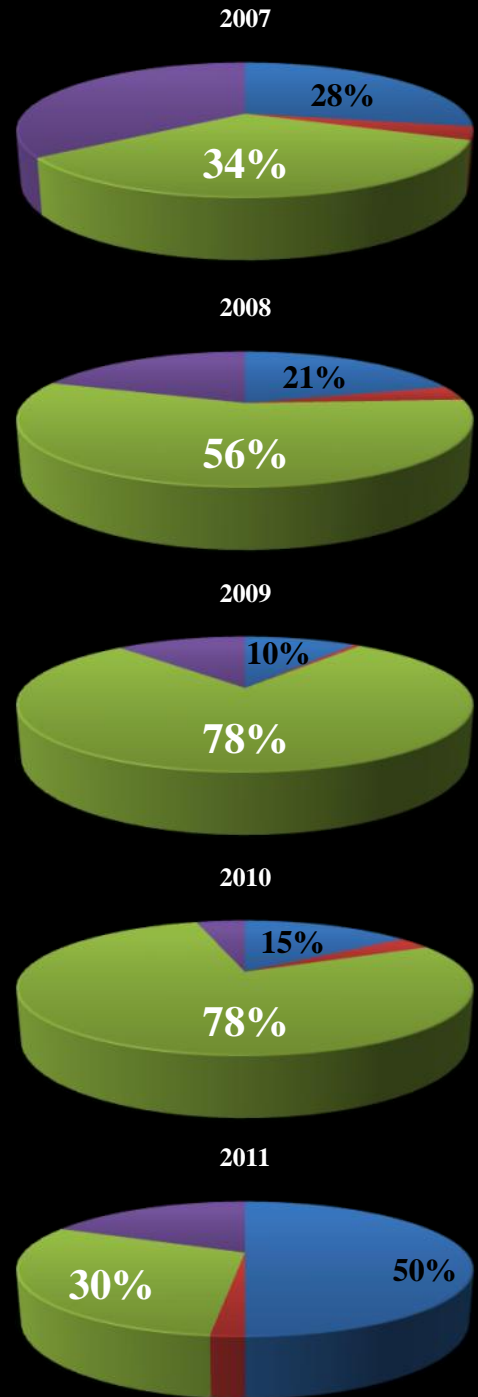


Figure 2. (Right) Relative abundance of fish species caught in gill-nets during the 2007 to 2011 annual surveys at Prewitt Reservoir. Fish caught in trap nets are not included.

■ Walleye/Saugeye ■ Temperate basses ■ Gizzard shad ■ Other species



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About the Fish...

Walleye and saugeye

Prewitt Reservoir is primarily managed as a walleye and saugeye fishery because these species have had greater success in the reservoir than wiper. Walleye and saugeye caught during the 2011 annual survey were 15.5" and 13.2" long on average, with the largest walleye and saugeye being 19.1" and 16.1", respectively (Table 1). Approximately 56% of the walleye and saugeye sampled exceeded the 15" minimum size limit, supplying anglers with several fish that are already keeper-sized (Figure 3). Additionally, many of the 10 to 15" fish sampled in 2011 should exceed 15" by the spring of 2012. Though fewer numbers of walleye and saugeye were caught during the 2011 annual survey than during the 2010 annual survey, fishing will likely be better in 2012 than in 2011 due to the gizzard shad population decline (Figure 2).

Table 1. Summary data for fish caught during the 2011 annual survey at Prewitt Reservoir. Data are based on 52 hours of gillnetting. Unfortunately, low water levels prevented the use of trap nets and high winds compromised fish weights.

Species	Number caught	Length (inches) [mean (range)]
Black crappie	3	9.2 (8.5-9.9)
Bluegill	1	6.7 (6.7-6.7)
Gizzard shad	31	11.1 (4.7-16.3)
Rainbow trout	3	11.6 (10.7-12.6)
River carpsucker	1	11.2 (11.2-11.2)
Cutbow	8	11.3 (9.7-12.3)
Saugeye	8	13.2 (9.2-16.1)
Wiper	2	21.9 (20.7-23.0)
Walleye	44	15.5 (12.2-19.1)
White sucker	1	14.6 (14.6-14.6)
Yellow perch	2	8.2 (7.9-8.5)

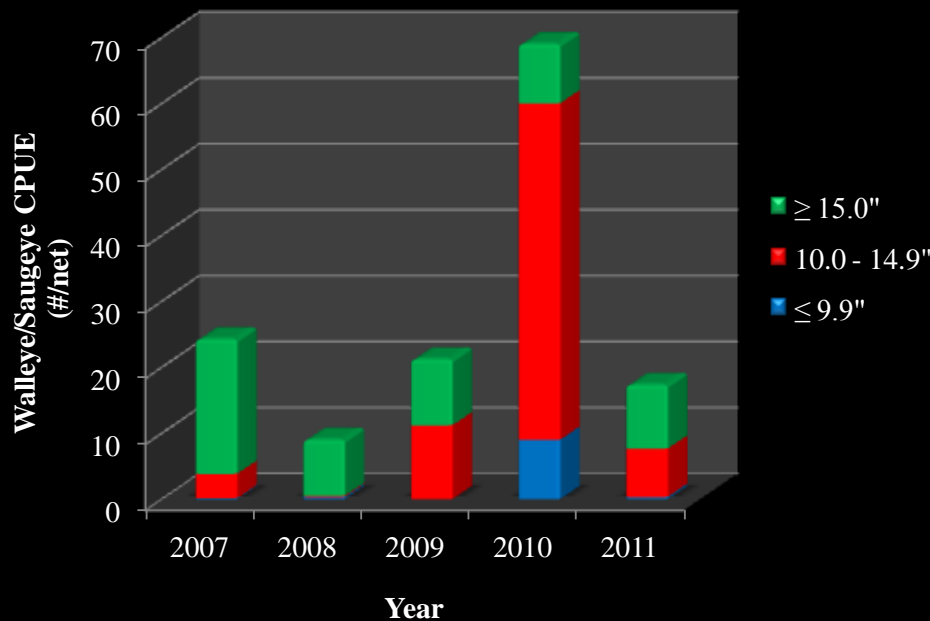


Figure 3. (Left) Walleye and saugeye catch-per-unit-effort (CPUE) during the 2007 to 2011 annual surveys at Prewitt Reservoir. For comparative purposes, the number of fish collected was standardized per gillnet.



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About the Fish...

Temperate basses (white bass, striped bass, and wiper)

Wiper were initially stocked into Prewitt Reservoir in 1982 to increase angler harvest of warmwater sportfish. Though this species has been stocked on a nearly annual basis for this purpose, desired stocking rates have not been achieved in most years due to low wiper availability. In 2007, white bass and striped bass were also stocked into the reservoir. Despite stocking nearly three million temp-



erate basses since 2006, wiper, white bass, and striped bass have only comprised one to two percent of the catch during annual surveys. Low numbers of temperate basses can be attributed to low availability, poor recruitment due to cold water temperatures at the time of stocking, reservoir draw down, or a combination of the these factors. Anglers seeking temperate basses are encouraged to fish for wiper at Jackson and North Sterling Reservoirs.



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Master Angler Awards

<u>Year</u>	<u>Species</u>	<u>Length</u>	<u>Angler Name</u>
2011	Wiper	30"	Kim Campbell
2011	Cutbow trout	23 3/4"	Vincent Hacking
2011	Common carp	32"	Wesley Hardy
2010	Channel catfish	36"	Rodney Hardy
2010	Channel catfish	32"	Brey Wyett
2010	Channel catfish	31"	Donna Harper
2010	Channel catfish	30"	Corby Wyett
2010	Channel catfish	30"	Tim Schroeder
2010	Blue catfish	31"	Hunter Schroeder
2009	Channel catfish	34"	Brian Robinson
2009	Channel catfish	32"	Sean Ford II
2008	Channel catfish	33 1/2"	Johnny Guzman
2008	Channel catfish	31"	Matthew Dean

