



Meadow Creek Reservoir

FISH SURVEY AND MANAGEMENT DATA

Jon Ewert - Aquatic Biologist (Hot Sulphur Springs)

General Information: Meadow Creek Reservoir is a small (104 acres) impoundment at an elevation of 9,947 feet approximately ten miles east of Tabernash, CO. The reservoir provides municipal water supply to Front Range cities, and is connected to the Moffat Tunnel Collection system operated by the Denver Water Board.

Recreational Management: Arapaho National Recreation Area, Arapaho National Forest. The Forest Service charges a use fee for recreation on this water body. There is a permit kiosk on the road immediately below the reservoir. By Forest Service regulation, motorized boating is not allowed.

Fishery Management: Cold water species

Amenities and General Info

- There are several primitive campsites in the vicinity of Meadow Creek Reservoir. These are undeveloped in nature. Running water is not available. There is a single pit toilet.

Regulations

- Standard harvest regulations for trout (4 fish daily bag/8 fish in possession) . Anglers are encouraged to take advantage of the additional bag limit for small brook trout, which allows for an additional limit of 10 fish, 8 inches or less in length.

Previous Stocking

2011

Species	Size	Number
Rainbow	10"	4,000

2010

Species	Size	Number
Rainbow	10"	1,300

2009

Species	Size	Number
Rainbow	10"	4,000

Sportfishing Notes

Meadow Creek Reservoir offers an opportunity to hone your skills in a beautiful setting at the base of the Indian Peaks Wilderness Area. During quiet summer mornings and evenings the lake becomes very active with surface-feeding brook trout. Most of the fish are small, but there are plenty of them. Casting a dry fly from a float tube or canoe can be highly entertaining during these times. Because the brook trout population is so prolific it is also somewhat stunted (see following page). Anglers are strongly encouraged to harvest fish, particularly the additional bag limit available for brook trout, which allows for the harvest of 10 fish 8 inches long or less.

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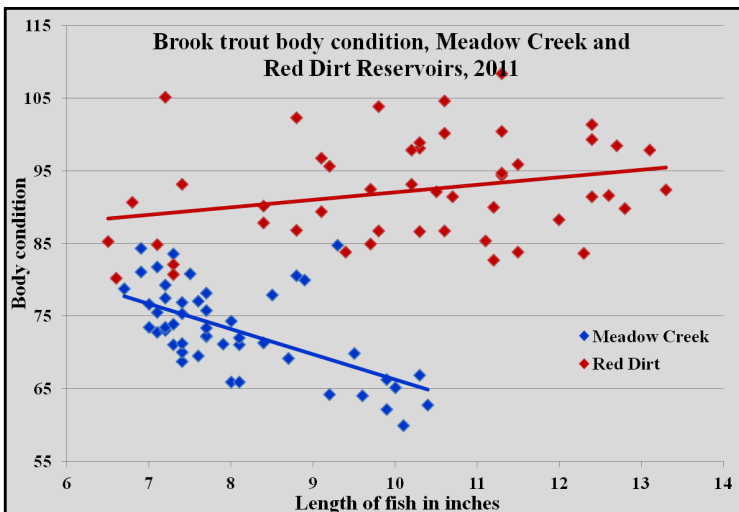
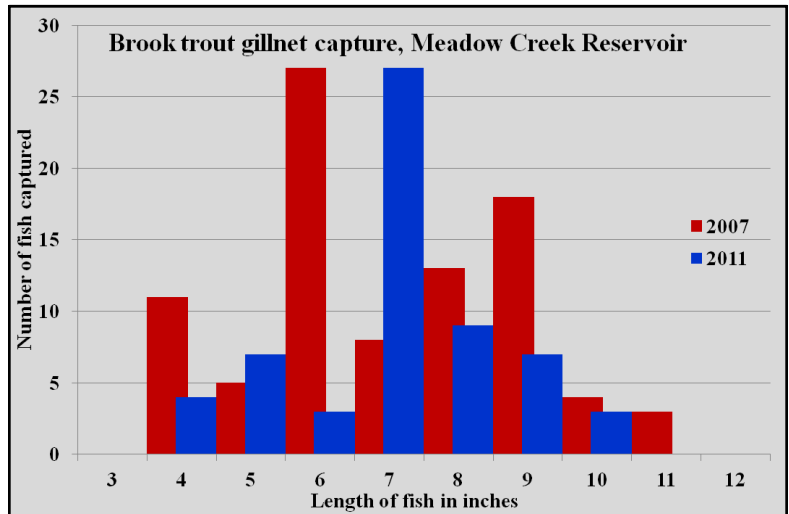
gillnet survey data
Jon Ewert - aquatic biologist



We set four 150' gillnets overnight (locations at left) on July 5 & 6, 2011 to assess the current fish population in Meadow Creek Reservoir. Due to huge amounts of snowpack and late melt-out in 2011, rainbow trout had not yet been stocked when we set these nets. This gave us an opportunity to determine whether or not fish that we stock are surviving the winter in this reservoir. Nets had also been set in these locations in 2007.

Brook trout comprised 100% of the fish caught in the 2011 sample. The size distribution of the fish captured is shown at right. It was interesting that no rainbow trout were captured in 2011. This is a relatively deep lake for its size and there is no reason to believe that rainbow trout would not survive the winter here. Rather, it is more likely that the small number of fish stocked in 2010 (due to budgetary constraints in our hatchery system) was inadequate to fulfill recreational demand with some fish remaining to overwinter.

The 2007 and 2011 samples at right both show a distinct growth barrier to brook trout at the 6-7" mark, with few fish larger than that size being captured. The 2011 sample is especially pronounced in that regard.



The figure at left compares body condition and size between Meadow Creek and another water sampled in 2011, Red Dirt Reservoir (see Red Dirt report). This is an excellent study in the contrast between an obviously stunted brook trout population (Meadow Creek) and a population that does not show signs of stunting (Red Dirt). Body condition in the Meadow Creek brook trout declines sharply as the fish get larger (i.e., the fish get skinnier for their size), and no fish larger than 11 inches were captured. In contrast, the Red Dirt brook trout actually have a slightly improving body condition as they get larger, and fish up to nearly 14 inches were captured. This information is the main basis for the statement that Meadow Creek would benefit from harvest of small brook trout.