



Clear Creek Reservoir

FISH SURVEY AND MANAGEMENT DATA

Greg A. Policky - Aquatic Biologist (Salida)

greg.policky@state.co.us / 719-530-5525

General Information: Clear Creek Reservoir, a 407 acre impoundment, offers excellent fishing for rainbow and brown trout. The kokanee salmon fishery is rebounding from an earlier die-off and tiger muskie are reaching trophy size. To view map see page 2 or go to <http://maps.google.com/maps>

Location: Chaffee County. Located at the mouth of Clear Creek just south of Granite, Colorado.

Recreational Management: Colorado Division of Wildlife (719-530-5520).

Fishery Management: Coldwater angling for rainbow and brown trout, kokanee salmon and tiger muskie.

Detailed Fishery Information: See additional pages. **Note:** This lake was not surveyed in 2010.

Amenities and General Info.

- CDOW State Wildlife Area
- Boat ramp (1) with rest-room
- Dispersed camping allowed in inlet area
- Dam, spillway, outlet downstream to Hwy 24 closed to public

Regulations

- Kokanee salmon snagging allowed October 1 to December 31 upstream to gauging station (1/2 mile above reservoir).
- The bag and possession limit for tiger muskie is 1, 36 inches or longer.
- Statewide bag and possession limits apply for other species (see CDOW Fishery Brochure).

Previous Stocking

2010

Rainbow Trout
Brown Trout
Kokanee Salmon

2009

Rainbow Trout
Brown Trout
Kokanee Salmon

2008

Rainbow Trout
Brown Trout
Kokanee Salmon

WARNING!!!

Prevent the Spread of Zebra Mussels and other Aquatic Nuisance Species

- **Clean, drain, and dry your boat after each use.**
- **Clear Creek Reservoir requires mandatory inspections before launching.**

Sportfishing Notes

Trout

- Excellent fishing for trout that average 12 inches with an occasional brown taken over 18 inches. Catchable (10+ inch) are stocked from May through September.

Kokanee Salmon

- Salmon fishery rebounding. Flyfishing with small flies and egg patterns during the fall spawning run can be productive.

Tiger Muskie

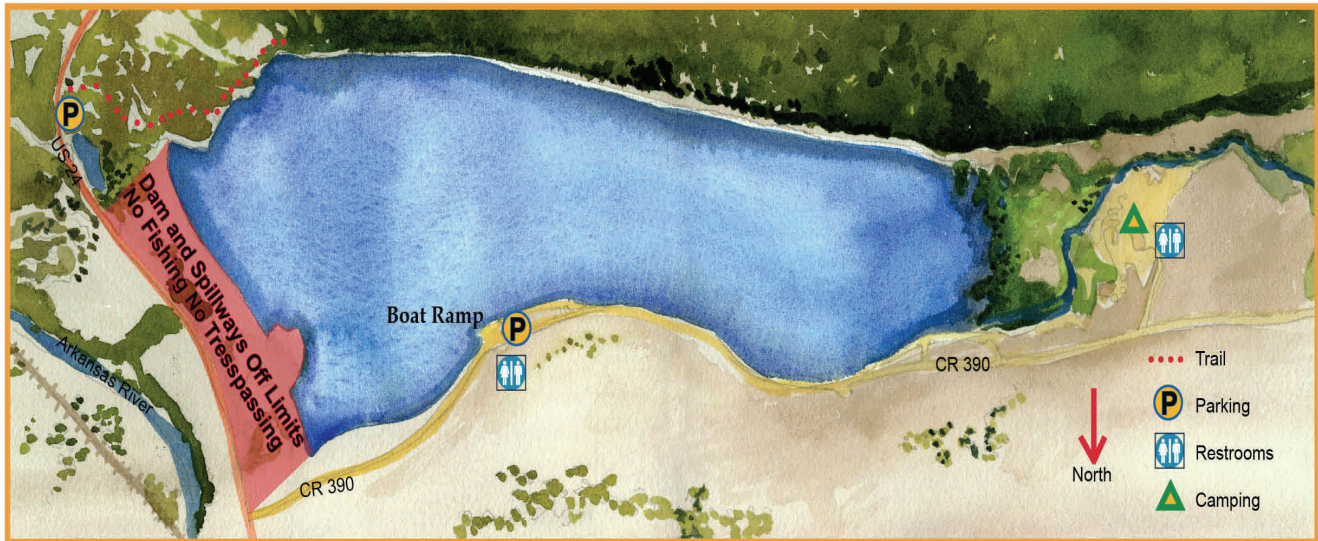
- Introduced to prey on an abundant sucker population. They average 28 inches and fish exceeding 30 inches are becoming more common.



Clear Creek Reservoir

2009 LAKE SURVEY DATA

Greg A. Policky - Aquatic Biologist
Salida Service Center



2009 Gillnetting Survey

Fall 2009 Survey Species	#Caught	Average Length and (Range) in Inches	Average Weight (lbs.)
Kokanee Salmon	8	8.0 (4.5-9.9)	0.3
Brown Trout	2	9.5 (6.9-12.1)	0.3
Rainbow Trout	93	11.8 (10.1-13.5)	0.5
Tiger Muskie	4	27.8 (24.4-31.5)	5.3
White Sucker	285	13.0 (6.0-16.9)	1.0



Clear Creek Reservoir

2011 FISHING FORECAST

Greg A. Policky - Aquatic Biologist

Salida Service Center

Clear Creek Reservoir is traditionally one of the most productive and dependable fishing reservoirs in the upper Arkansas River basin. Catch rates consistently exceed one fish/angler-hour and the majority of anglers rate the quality of their fishing experience as good to excellent. It produces excellent fishing for stocked (10 inch) trout with an occasional large brown trout over 18 inches taken. Kokanee salmon survival and fishing has been poor in recent years but one and two year old fish were collected in 2009 forecasting their return to the fishery. Reasons for this decline are being investigated. Kokanee snagging is allowed in the reservoir and upstream about 0.5 miles to the gauging station from October 31 to December 31. Flycasters are learning that kokanee salmon can be caught with small flies and egg patterns during the spawning run, usually from October to December.

Tiger muskie, a sterile cross between a northern pike and a muskie, were recently introduced to this reservoir to prey on an abundant sucker population while providing the opportunity for anglers to catch a trophy sized fish. Small suckers have all but disappeared and overall numbers will soon decline as well. Tiger muskie averaged 28 inches in 2009 and fish exceeding 30 inches were more common. The limit for tiger muskie is one fish, 36 inches or longer.



The lake is serviced by one concrete boat ramp and a boat dock will be installed in 2011. Boating was not allowed in 2008 to prevent the spread of zebra/quagga mussels into the reservoir. A watercraft inspection program was initiated at this reservoir in 2009, was expanded in 2010 and will continue in 2011. For a 2011 inspection schedule go to <http://wildlife.state.co.us/Fishing/MandatoryBoatInspections.htm>



Clear Creek Reservoir MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

Greg A. Policky - Aquatic Biologist
Salida Service Center

Clear Creek Reservoir fluctuates moderately but is quite productive due to its basin configuration and prevalence of shallow water. The sportfish community has changed little since 1989. Rainbow and cutthroat trout gill net catch can be quite inconsistent, largely dependent on recent catchable stocking. Brown trout and kokanee salmon are stocked as fingerlings and their gill net catch depends on their ability to survive and grow in this habitat. Brown trout recruitment has been fair while kokanee salmon survival is improving. Factors that may have limited kokanee salmon survival in the past include; stocking practices, disease, habitat, and/or tiger muskie predation).

Tiger muskie were introduced in 2004-2006 to prey on an abundant sucker population and to restore balance in the fishery. They are a sterile cross between northern pike and musky so their numbers can be closely controlled through stocking with no threat of natural reproduction. They have worked well to control suckers in other coldwater Colorado reservoirs of similar size and productivity. A sucker standing crop of 20-30% of the fish community is desired without undue tiger muskie predation on other fish (e.g. trout). The goal is to sustain a low density population of trophy-sized tiger muskie to reduce sucker biomass while improving survival and growth of sportfish species. They have survived well in this productive habitat. All three years classes showed up in the 2007 gill net catch. They ranged in size from 15-24 inches and averaged close to 19 inches. White suckers comprised 90% of the fish community by weight in 2007, however few suckers were collected under 12 inches, empirical evidence of tiger muskie predation. As tiger muskie average size increases, larger suckers will become a greater part of their diet. Sucker biomass declined to 76% by weight in 2008 and was 80% in 2009. Tiger muskie average size reached 26 inches in 2008 and 28 inches in 2009. Small suckers were again rare in the 2009 gill net catch but sucker biomass remains high. Annual tiger muskie stocking will be reinstated as soon as they are available. Seven inch fish will be stocked at 10/acre until sucker biomass reaches 20-30%. Once proper fish population balance is attained the tiger muskie stocking rate will be reduced to approximately 5/acre and community balance monitored thereafter. Because they are a sterile hybrid, light stocking is needed to maintain their presence.



The majority of anglers in 2008 rated their trip quality as good to excellent (70%). This compared to 43% of anglers that rated their trip quality as average or better in 1990.