



Pueblo Reservoir

FISH SURVEY AND MANAGEMENT DATA

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General Information: Pueblo Reservoir, approximately 4000 acres in size, offers good fishing for walleye, wiper, catfish, bass, and crappie. Additional species include bluegill, yellow perch, and rainbow trout. The reservoir has a State Park on the east end and a State Wildlife Area on the west end. For park hours, fees, and other information: <http://parks.state.co.us/Parks/lakepueblo>

Location: Pueblo County. The south entrance is located 5 miles west of Pueblo off of HWY 96 (Thatcher Blvd). The north entrance is south of HWY 50, and can be located by taking McCulloch Blvd. south from HWY 50 in Pueblo West, and turning south on Nichols Road.

Recreational Management: Colorado Parks and Wildlife (wildlife, 719-561-5300; Lake Pueblo State Park (719-561-9320)

Amenities

- Boat Ramps (2)
- Picnic Areas
- Camping
- Restrooms
- Marinas (2)
- Hiking trails

Regulations

<http://wildlife.state.co.us/RulesRegs/RegulationsBrochures/>

- Daily bag for walleye is 5 fish over 18" in length with no more than 1 fish over 21".
- Minimum size for largemouth, smallmouth and spotted bass is 15" in length.
- See the regulations brochure for bag and possession limits of all fish species.
- Underwater spearfishing is *only* allowed for the take of carp, northern pike, gizzard shad, white and longnose suckers, catfish, and wiper. *See regulations brochure for specific limits and restrictions.*
- **Fishing is prohibited from the dam.**
- Possessing filleted or cleaned fish in a boat on the lake is prohibited.

Previous Stocking

2011

Channel Catfish
Cuttbow
Largemouth Bass
McConaughy Rainbow Trout
Rainbow Trout
Walleye
Wiper

2010

Black Crappie
Channel Catfish
Cuttbow
Largemouth Bass
McConaughy Rainbow Trout
Rainbow Trout
Walleye
Wiper

2009

Channel Catfish
Cuttbow
Flathead Catfish
McConaughy Rainbow Trout
Walleye
Wiper

Sportfishing Notes

Walleye

- Big walleye are present in good numbers because the regulations protect larger fish. This regulation gives anglers an opportunity to catch a trophy fish and allows for an egg take operation that supplies other Colorado waters with millions of young walleye.

Wipers

- Wipers provide a fishery for quality fish and allow anglers to take fish home for the table. Wiper fishing is spotty and requires adaptability by anglers to catch these fish.

Bass

- Pueblo contains three species of bass: largemouth, smallmouth and spotted. Many techniques are used to catch these fish and all can be caught virtually year round. A minimum size regulation allows some harvest while also protecting young fish and some spawning adults.



PUEBLO RESERVOIR

FISH SAMPLING DATA



2011 FALL SAMPLING

Image © 2012 DigitalGlobe

Google earth

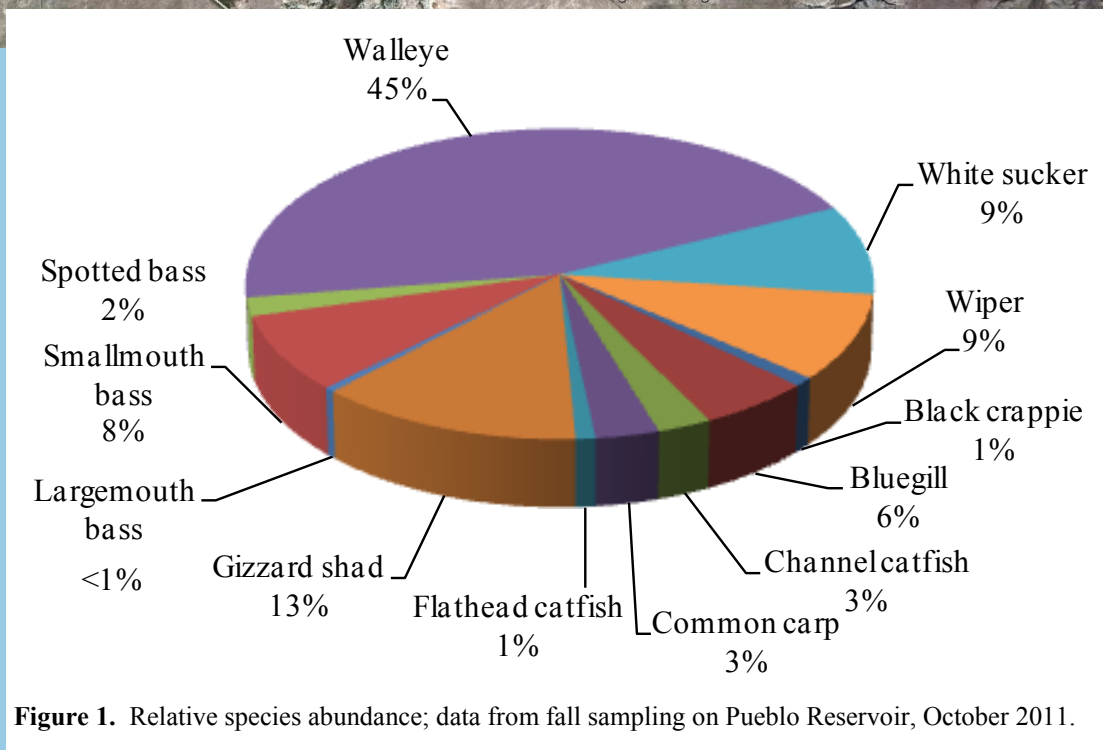


Figure 1. Relative species abundance; data from fall sampling on Pueblo Reservoir, October 2011.



PUEBLO RESERVOIR

FISH SAMPLING DATA AND 2012 FORECAST

2011 FALL SAMPLING (CONTINUED)

Species	# Caught	Length (in)		Weight (lbs)	
		Average	(Range)	Average	(Range)
Black Crappie	4	7.7	(2.9-9.9)	0.33	(0.04-0.46)
Bluegill	23	6.5	(2.8-8.3)	0.25	(0.04-0.41)
Channel Catfish	11	20.7	(14.0-32.8)	3.83	(0.89-13.46)
Common Carp	13	22.5	(17.3-26.1)	5.66	(2.26-9.31)
Flathead Catfish	4	18.3	(12.4-24.1)	2.81	(0.67-6.02)
Gizzard Shad	54	14.2	(1.4-18.7)	1.08	(0.08-1.79)
Largemouth Bass	2	10.1	(8.1-12.1)	0.50	(0.18-0.82)
Smallmouth Bass	34	10.2	(8.0-14.2)	0.51	(0.18-1.34)
Spotted Bass	8	10.1	(7.7-14.7)	0.60	(0.20-1.78)
Walleye	189	14.5	(7.0-25.4)	1.04	(0.05-5.30)
White Sucker	39	17.7	(13.9-19.6)	2.46	(1.06-5.56)
Wiper	38	18.5	(13.5-25.3)	3.46	(1.30-10.11)
TOTALS	419				

BLACK BASSES



Pueblo has three species of black bass (largemouth, smallmouth, and spotted). Numbers of bass in Pueblo Reservoir are high. Most fish are smaller than 15" in length, but some over 15" can be caught. Although bass larger than 15" were not sampled in 2011 gillnetting (Figure 2), they were seen while electrofishing the reservoir. Gillnet-

ting (which produced the data in Figure 2) is not the most productive way to catch bass and more complete analyses of the bass populations are scheduled for the summer of 2012. Anglers should see good catches of bass in 2012, as the number of smaller fish (blue bars in Figure 2) was high in 2011 and those fish will grow into nice sized fish in 2012. Fishing is particularly good in the spring.

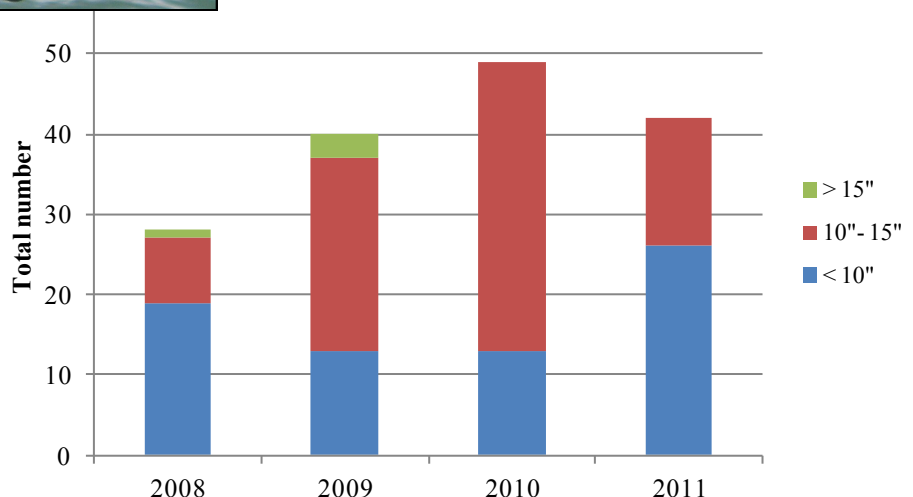


Figure 2. The number of black bass (largemouth, smallmouth, and spotted) collected in gillnets at Pueblo Reservoir from 2008 to 2011.



PUEBLO RESERVOIR

FISH SAMPLING DATA AND 2012 FORECAST

WALLEYE

The total number of walleyes caught in gillnets in 2011 was higher than recent years, particularly the 11-17" length group. (Figure 3) A large cohort of mid-range fish should lead to a better than average group of legal-sized fish in the near future. The smallest group of walleyes was the 18" and over fish, but gillnet samples do not do a good job of assessing the status of larger walleye in the reservoir. Larger walleye, between 18 and 30 inches in length, are present in the reservoir in good numbers but are difficult to catch, especially when gizzard shad are numerous. Average catches of walleye in Pueblo Reservoir yields around 3 to 7 legal fish per 100 fish caught.

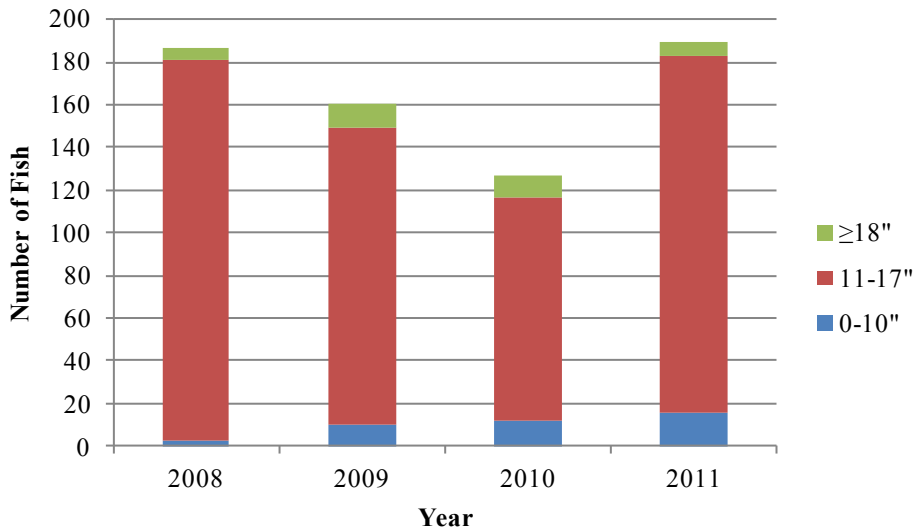


Figure 3. The number of walleye collected in gillnets at Pueblo Reservoir from 2008 to 2011.

Anglers looking for larger fish should use larger baits and move away from the large schools of small fish. Catch rates will be significantly lower, but quality of fish will be significantly higher.

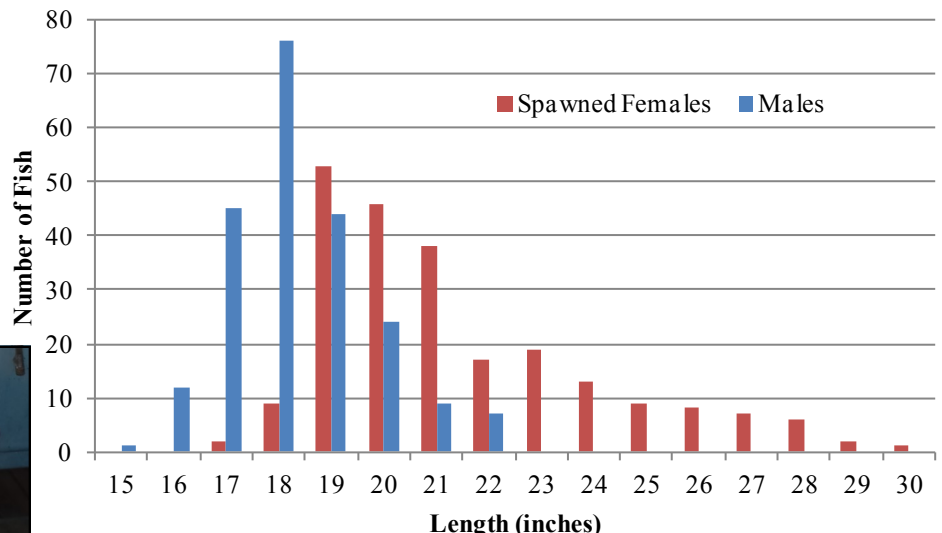


Figure 4. The number and sex of fish caught and spawned at Pueblo Reservoir walleye spawn, 2011.

The walleye population in Pueblo Reservoir supports a spawning operation where biologists and hatcheries produce walleyes and saugeyes to stock in lakes and reservoirs throughout Colorado. These fish are also used to trade with other states so we can obtain fish we do not typically produce, like wiper. The data from the 2011 walleye spawn indicated a good number of fish of legal size, up to 30 inches in length. (Figure 4).

The highest catch rates for walleye will usually occur from mid-May to the end of June. At this time the fish will be located on the flats and points in shallow water and will be feeding heavily.



PUEBLO RESERVOIR

FISH SAMPLING DATA AND 2012 FORECAST

WIPER

Wiper continue to be stocked yearly in good numbers. In 2011, the wiper caught in gillnets were most often between 10 and 20 inches in length, but a good group of fish were over 20 inches in size (Figure 5). The number of wipers was higher than recent years, indicating that the population is doing well. Fishing for wipers requires a lot of effort and patience as these fish are very particular about what they eat and when they eat it. Techniques to catch wipers change with the season and availability and size of forage in the reservoir. Wiper anglers must pay attention to the changes and adapt their techniques. Best times to catch wipers include April and May and August through October.

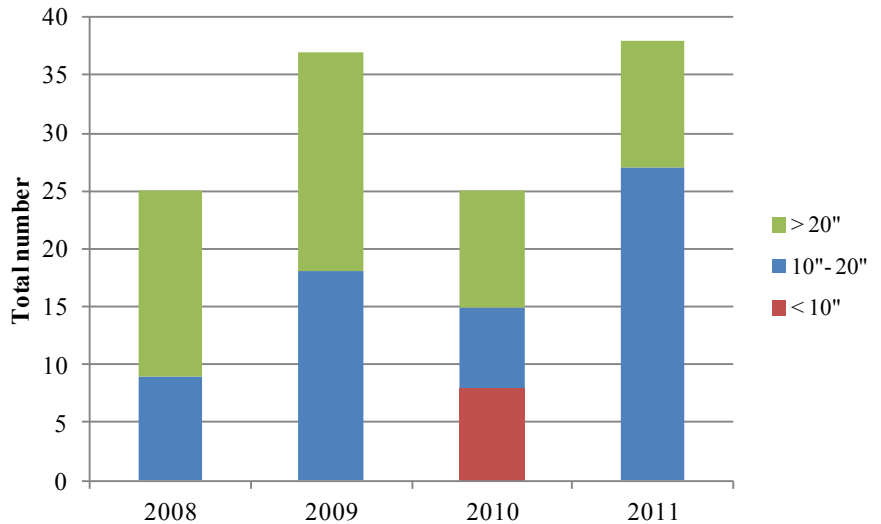


Figure 5. The number of wiper collected in gillnets at Pueblo Reservoir from 2008 to 2011.

CATFISH

Pueblo has three species of catfish (channel, flathead, and blue). Numbers of catfish in Pueblo Reservoir have been fairly consistent from 2008 to 2011 (Figure 6), with a wide range of size classes present. Most fish are between 10 and 30" in length, but quite a few over 30" can be caught. Blue catfish stocking has been discontinued due to poor survival and those fish are rare. Channel catfish are more abundant than flathead catfish, but the flatheads that are caught are typically large. In 2011, the state record flathead catfish was caught at Pueblo Reservoir by Dave Parker. Stocking of flathead catfish has not been possible in recent years, which contributes to their low population size. In 2012, catch rates for catfish will likely be somewhat low, but the quality of fish could be very high.

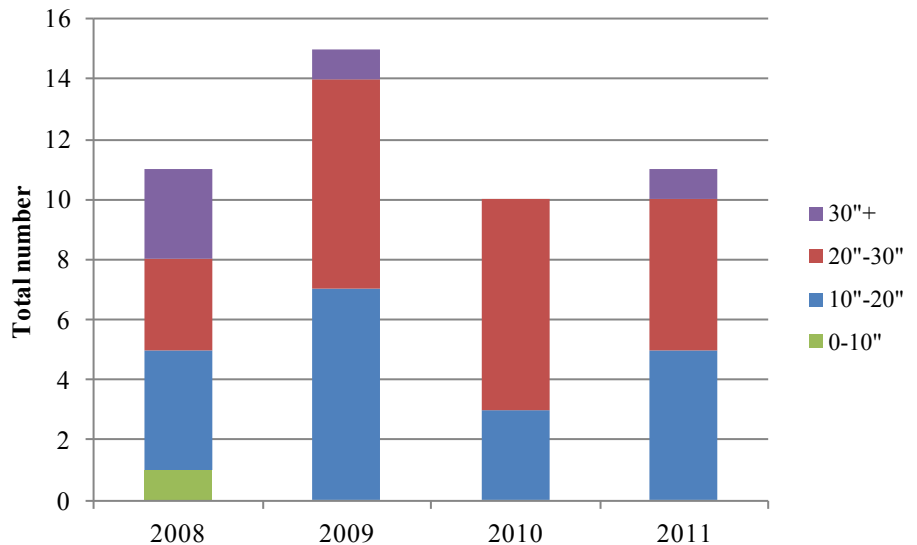


Figure 6. The number of catfish (flathead and channel) collected in gillnets at Pueblo Reservoir from 2008 to 2011.



PUEBLO RESERVOIR

2012 FORECAST AND MASTER ANGLER AWARDS

OTHER SPECIES

Pueblo Reservoir also contains fishable populations of black and white crappie, bluegill, yellow perch and rainbow trout. Both of the species of crappie can be caught year round in the reservoir at very good sizes. A number of “catchable” (10”) trout are stocked in the North and South marina coves during the early spring. Subcatchable (< 3”) McConaughay rainbow trout are stocked in the summer. Anglers fishing in January through March can catch some rainbows that run from 16 to 24 inches in length. Boat anglers can also pick up these better trout by trolling from April through June.



MASTER ANGLER AWARDS

The Master Angler Recognition Program is designed to recognize anglers for success in their sport, as well as to promote the conservation of fishery resources and quality fishing by encouraging the careful release of trophy-size popular sport species. The program offers Master Angler award certificates in two general categories: fish caught and released, and fish caught and kept. Awards are based on fish length rather than weight. See <http://wildlife.state.co.us/Fishing/AwardsRecords/MasterAnglers/Pages/MasterAnglers.aspx> for more information.

2011 Pueblo Reservoir Master Anglers

Name	Species	Length	Location	Month	Year	Status
Roy Seeley	wiper	29 1/2"	Lake Pueblo	July	2011	Kept
John Van Hoesen	smallmouth bass	17 1/3"	Pueblo Reservoir	July	2011	Kept
George Acree	walleye	31"	Pueblo Reservoir	July	2011	Released
Shantro Buck	wiper	25"	Pueblo Reservoir	August	2011	Kept
Jeff Solverson	walleye	30"	Pueblo Reservoir	August	2011	Kept
Annetta Dewald	smallmouth bass	17 3/4"	Pueblo Reservoir	September	2011	Released
Jeff Solverson	common carp	32"	Pueblo Reservoir	October	2011	Released
Weston Dalton	wiper	30 1/4"	Pueblo Reservoir	November	2011	Kept
Rylie Mayer	bluegill	10"	Pueblo Reservoir	November	2011	Released
Benjamin Wurster	common carp	30"	Pueblo Res.-North Shore	December	2011	Released
Dan Hoppes	smallmouth bass	21"	Pueblo Reservoir	December	2011	Kept
Jeff Solverson	smallmouth bass	17"	Pueblo Reservoir	December	2011	Released
Jeff Solverson	smallmouth bass	18"	Pueblo Reservoir	December	2011	Released