



Groundhog Reservoir

FISH SURVEY AND MANAGEMENT DATA

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General Information: Groundhog Reservoir is 667 surface acres and provides an “off the beaten” path fishing experience for that angler looking for big trout at a drive to lake with little fishing pressure. Groundhog is a coldwater fishery consisting primarily of cutthroat and rainbow trout. **Location:** Dolores County. From Dolores, CO take 11th Street north as it merges into CR 31. CR 31 is paved (~5 mi) and turns into FS 526. Follow FS 526 about 20 miles NE and turn E on FR 533. Groundhog is approximately 5 miles down FR 533.

Recreational Management: Colorado Division of Wildlife, 970-247-0855 and Private. Contact Bonnie Candelaria at 505-330-3658 or go to www.groundhoglake.com for camping and lake store operation hours and fees.

Fishery Management: Cold water species. CDOW Area Office 970-247-0855

Amenities and General Info.

- Boat Ramps (1)
- Camping/RV Park
- Restrooms

Regulations

- Daily bag for trout is 4.
- Fishing is prohibited in Nash and Groundhog creek inlets upstream 1/2 mile from April 15-July 15.

Boats

- If your boat has been out of the state in the last 30 days it must be inspected for unwanted aquatic nuisance species before launching (call CDOW Area Office)

Previous Stocking

2009

Rainbow Trout (34,000 sub-catchables)
Cutthroat Trout (62,000 fingerlings)

2008

Rainbow Trout (0)
Cutthroat Trout (102,000 fingerlings)

2007

Rainbow Trout (0)
Cutthroat Trout (50,000 fingerlings)

Sportfishing Notes

Rainbow and Cutthroat Trout

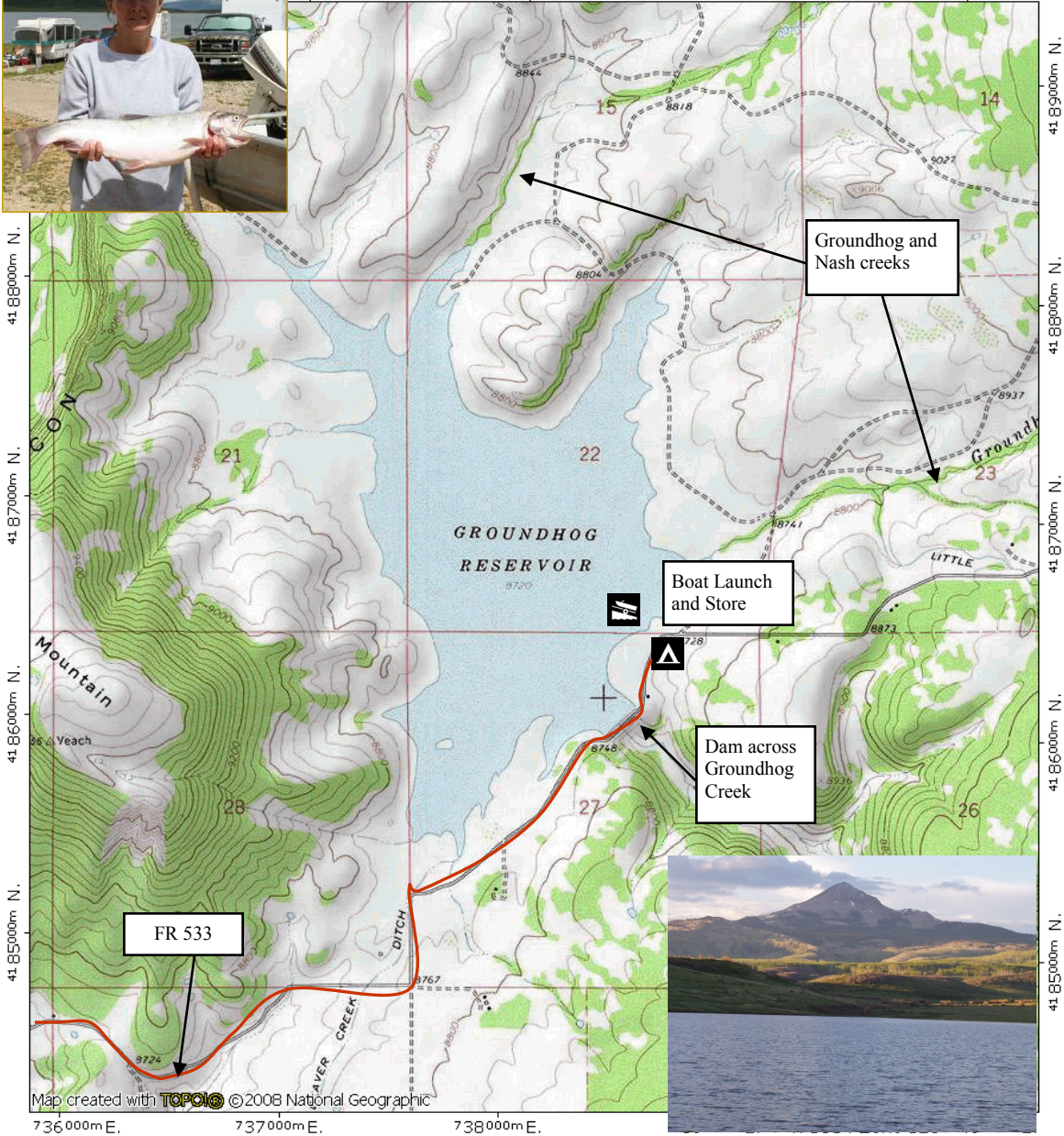
- Trout fishing is generally good year round in this highly productive reservoir known for producing large rainbow and cutthroat trout.

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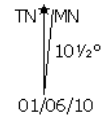
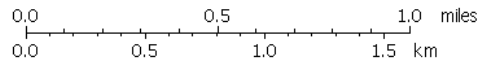
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7000m E, 738000m E, WGS84 Zone 12S 740000m E.



Map created with **TOPOL** © 2008 National Geographic

736000m E, 737000m E, 738000m E.



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2009 Gill Net Survey Results*

| Fish Species | # Caught | Average Length (Range) in inches | Average Weight in pounds |
|-----------------|----------|----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| cutthroat trout | 21 | 13.4 (8.3-16.4) | 0.99 |
| rainbow trout | 16 | 13.3 (7.5-20.9) | 1.06 |
| crayfish | 16 | | |

*Gillnet surveys consist of setting three 150 foot nets overnight at the same location and time (late May) as needed to assess fish population. Table is the combined catch for 2009.

Management Notes: Groundhog Reservoir was constructed in 1939 and is owned and operated by the Montezuma Valley Irrigation Company. Located in a high (8,100 ft) open valley the lake shape and water quality has all the characteristics needed to produce large trout. Trout up to 12 lbs have been reported by anglers in the past. In 1980 the lake level was lowered to repair a faulty outlet gate. The CDOW took advantage of the extremely low lake levels and removed an over abundant population of non-native suckers with a piscicide called rotenone. No suckers have been found in gillnet surveys in the intervening 30 years.

Because of its naturally productive waters, the CDOW uses a “put and grow” stocking and management strategy at Groundhog Reservoir. After a steep reservoir drawdown in 2004 that reduced the trout population the DOW has been stocking primarily native Colorado cutthroat trout fingerlings with the goal of establishing a strong recreational native trout fishery. So far, these native fish are not “returning to the creel” (i.e., being captured) as frequently as we had hoped and this year we started stocking rainbow trout after a several year hiatus. A strain of lake adapted rainbow called an “Eagle Lake” rainbow was stocked during the spring of 2009. We plan to evaluate the success of this and other strains of rainbow trout in the future.