



Ridgway Reservoir

FISH SURVEY AND MANAGEMENT INFORMATION

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General Information: Ridgway Reservoir is a popular fishery that provides angling opportunity for rainbow trout, brown trout, kokanee salmon, and yellow perch. This reservoir, located in Ridgway State Park, covers 1,030 surface acres at full capacity and is open year round to angling. Visit the State Parks website for information on regulations, camping, and recreation:

<http://parks.state.co.us/Parks/ridgway>

Location: 20 miles south of Montrose on Hwy 550.

Primary Management: Coldwater Intensive Management Category 505 (Put and Grow and Put and Take)

Amenities

- Boat Ramp
- Campgrounds (3)
- Marina
- Visitors Center
- Restrooms
- Parking Areas
- Picnic Shelters

WARNING !!!

Prevent the Spread of Zebra Mussels and other Aquatic Nuisance Species

- Clean, drain, and dry your boat after each use.
- Ridgway State Park requires mandatory boat inspections before launching. Please check with the park for more information

Previous Stocking

2009

Rainbow Trout: 41,218

Brown Trout: 4,858

Splake: 8,040

2008

Rainbow Trout: 43,066

Brown Trout: 10,000

Splake: 16,038

2007

Rainbow Trout: 54,481

Brown Trout: 10,000

Splake: 15,213

2006

Rainbow Trout: 67,407

Brown Trout: 20,000

2005

Rainbow Trout: 60,837

Sportfishing Notes

Rainbow Trout

- Good spots include the boat ramp cove and the inlet
- Good baits include black wooly buggers, spinners, jigs, and worms

Brown Trout

- Good spots include the inlet, west shore, and around the dam
- Best fishing times include ice out and mid to late fall
- Fishing is best in early evening and at night
- Good baits include streamers with sinking fly lines, minnow imitations, crankbaits, and jigs

Kokanee Salmon

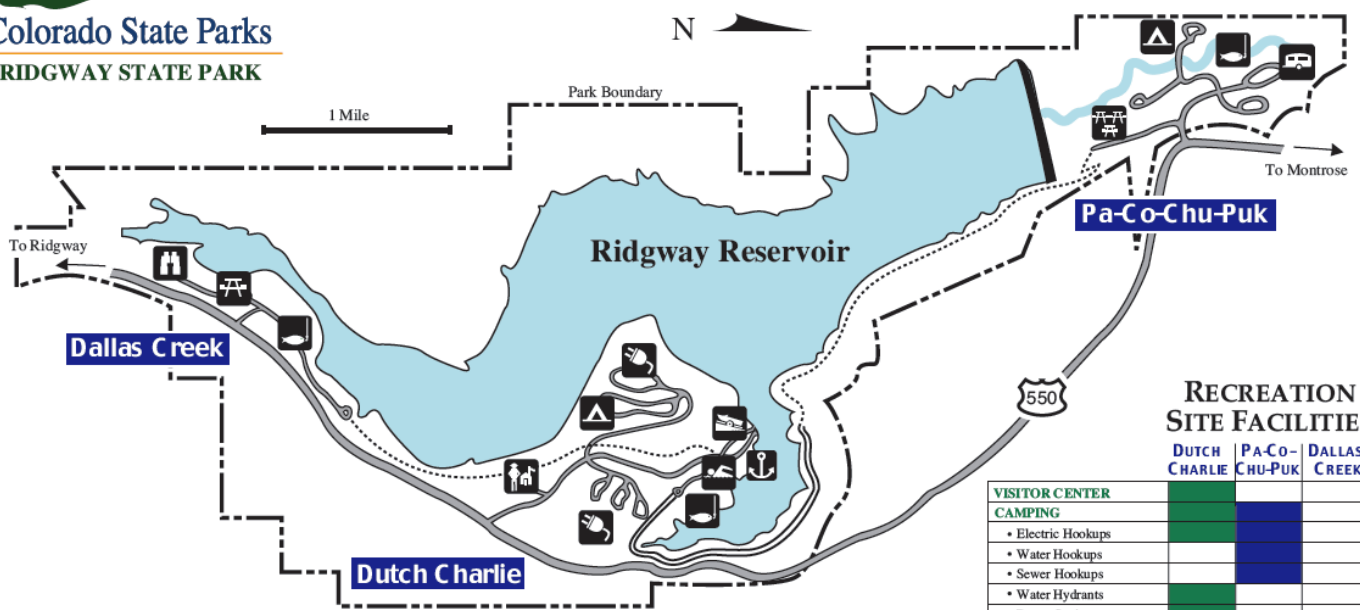
- Salmon begin congregating in the upper end of the reservoir in August and can be caught on jigs, beadhead nymphs and streamers in the Uncompahgre River in October and November



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LEGEND

	Tent Camping		Full Utility Hookups
	Group Picnic Area		Electric Hookups
	Nature Study		Park Headquarters/Visitors Center
	Boat Ramp		Fishing
	Swimbeach		Picnicking
	Marina		Gravel Trail
	Roads		Concrete Trail
			Park Boundary

RECREATION SITE FACILITIES

	DUTCH CHARLIE	PA-CO-CHU-PUK	DALLAS CREEK
VISITOR CENTER			
CAMPING			
• Electric Hookups			
• Water Hookups			
• Sewer Hookups			
• Water Hydrants			
• Dump Station			
CAMPER SERVICES			
• Showers			
• Laundry			
• Vending Machines			
• Phone			
• Playground			
• Restrooms			
TENT CAMPING			
PICNIC SITES			
GROUP PICNIC AREA			
BOAT RAMP			
MARINA			
SWIMBEACH			
FISHING			
• Lake Access			
• River Fishing			
• Pond Fishing			
FISH CLEANING STATION			
TRAILS			



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Table 1. Species composition and size in inches of fish sampled through gillnet surveys in 2005 and 2008. The 2005 survey was done in June with larger mesh gill nets to target large rainbow and brown trout and minimize the catch of small perch. The 2008 survey was done with standard experimental gill nets to sample a broader range of fish species and sizes.

	2005		2008	
	% Catch	Mean Length (Length Range)	% Catch	Mean Length (Length Range)
Kokanee	2.0	10.2 (9.3-11.3)	18.1	11.9 (9.9-15.5)
Longnose Sucker	69.8	5.3 (1.0-14.6)	29.3	11.1 (6.5-17.5)
Largemouth Bass			0.2	10 (10.0-10.0)
Brown Trout	8.1	18.6 (8.9-32.7)	2.7	15.2 (9.7-20.1)
Rainbow Trout	8.1	11.1 (7.0-13.9)	10.0	10.9 (8.2-12.6)
Green Sunfish	6.7	7.3 (6.6-8.1)	0.6	5.8 (5.6-6.1)
Yellow Perch	5.4	5.7 (1.3-9.1)	39.1	6.2 (3.7-10.7)



Figure 1. Number of catchable sized (>10 inch) rainbow trout stocked in Ridgway reservoir 2001-2009. Most of the fish caught by anglers throughout the year are stocked rainbows. Recently, because of reduced fish production and lower budgets, fewer catchable trout have been available to stock at Ridgway.



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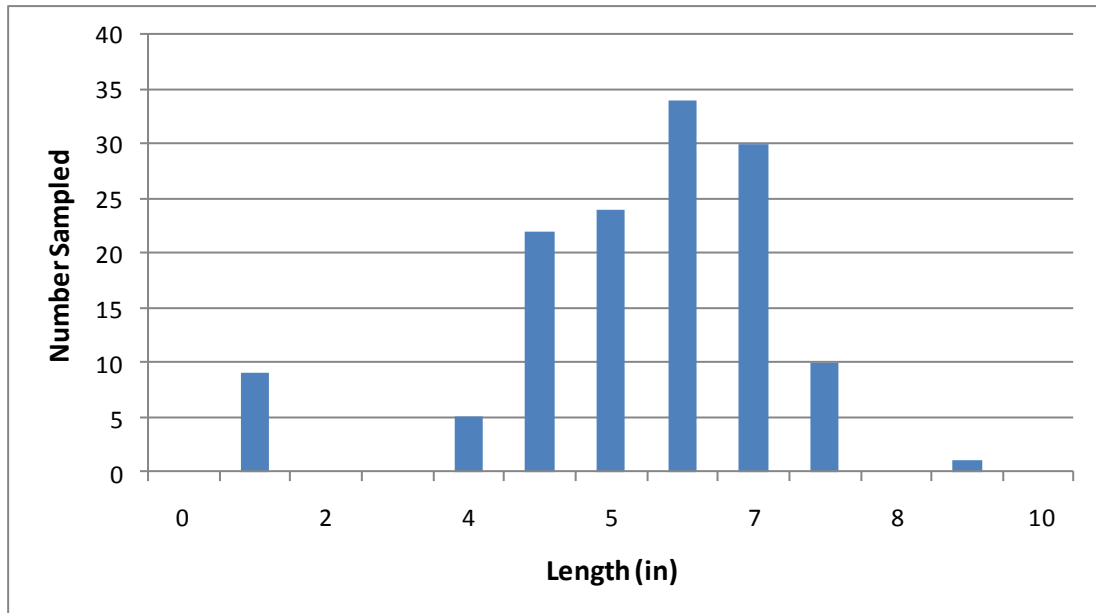


Figure 2. Length frequency histogram of yellow perch in Ridgway sampled in 2005. Because of overpopulation and poor forage base, perch rarely grow larger than eight inches in Ridgway.

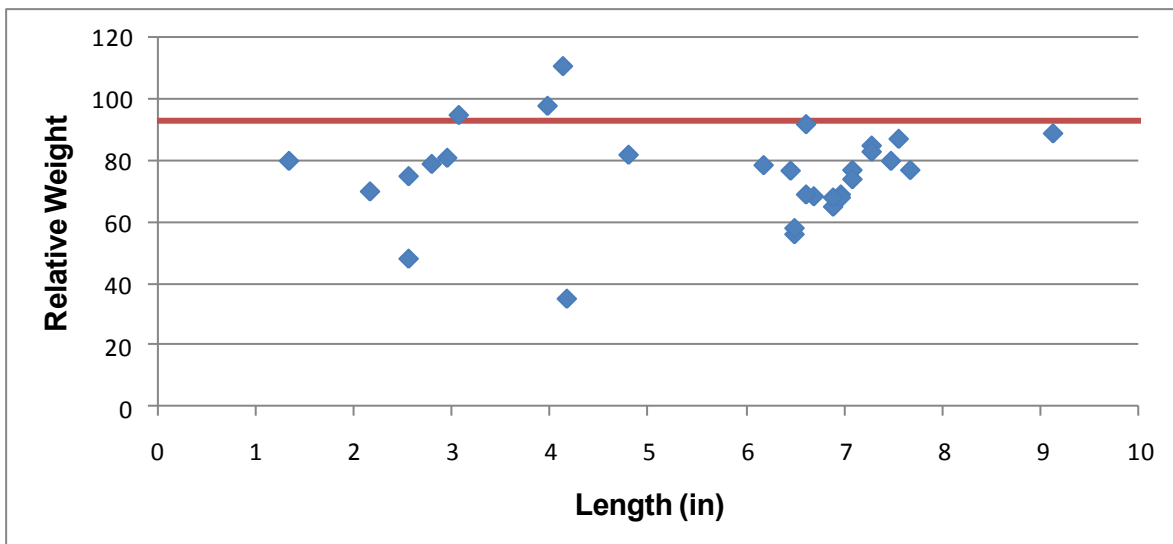


Figure 3. Relative weight plot for yellow perch in Ridgway sampled in 2005. The red line represents a relative weight of 93% which shows average body condition for perch across it's range. The low relative weights and lack of large individuals in the population indicate the Ridgway perch population is stunted.



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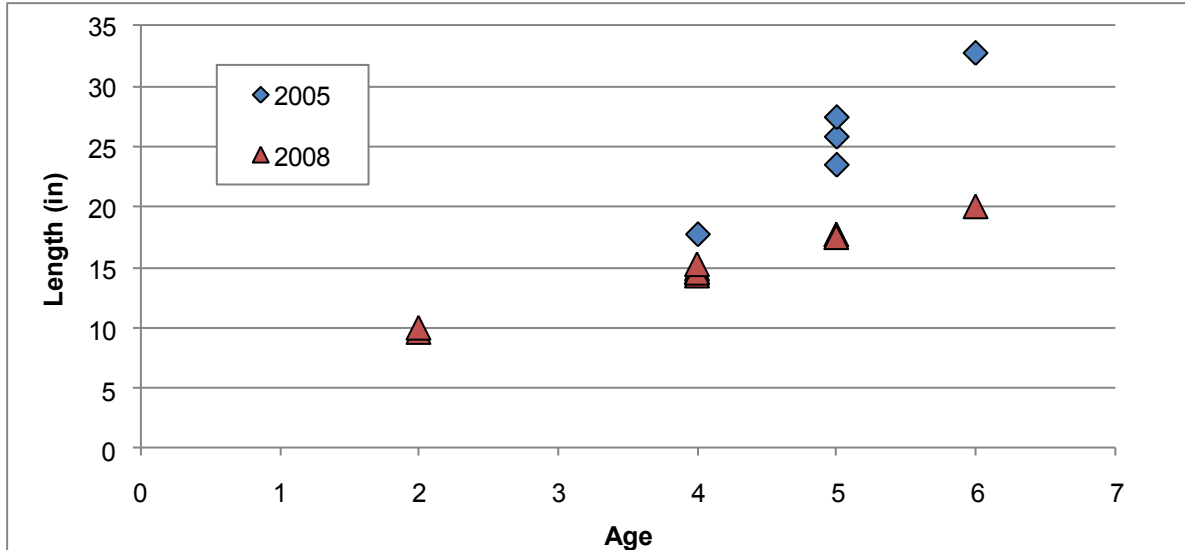


Figure 4. Length at age data for brown trout in Ridgway from scale samples taken in 2005 and 2008. Growth was faster in the earlier sample due to drought conditions and warmer water temperatures in the reservoir. Brown trout growth increases substantially once they become large enough to take advantage of abundant sucker and perch forage and Ridgway has the potential to produce trophy sized fish rather quickly.

Management Summary

Ridgway Reservoir provides good angling for stocked rainbow trout, small yellow perch, and opportunity at trophy sized brown trout. Unfortunately, the reservoir is not fulfilling its potential as a sport fishery because much of the fish biomass is tied up in non-game fish (longnose suckers and stunted yellow perch). Because of low productivity and competition with suckers and perch, the growth and survival of young trout is low. To better manage this fishery under the current reservoir conditions, a new lake management plan is being developed and new strategies are being considered including putting a restrictive bag limit on large trout as well as introducing new predator fish such as lake trout, tiger muskie, or saugeye.



Figure 5. Brown trout sampled in Ridgway in June 2005. The fish was 33 inches long and weighed 18.5 lbs.